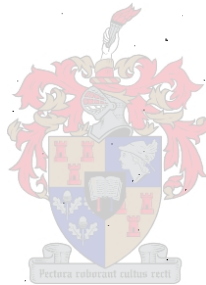


THE EFFECTS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
EVENTS ON THE ORDER OF FREEMASONS IN SOUTH
AFRICA, WITH SOME REFERENCE TO THE MOVEMENT
FOR THE FORMATION OF A UNITED GRAND LODGE,

1772 - 1961

by

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PREFACE

This dissertation sets out to illustrate the effects of political, economic and social events in history on the Order of Freemasons in South Africa, with some reference to the continuing movement for the formation of a United Grand Lodge in this country. The period covered is from 1772 to 1961 - the year of the establishment of the first independent Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa as it was then.

The major masonic events from 1961 to 1982 are recorded briefly in the Conclusion to illustrate that the concept of a United Grand Lodge in South Africa appears to be as far from realisation as it was when it was first mooted in 1870 by the Dutch Lodge Harmony at Richmond.

Chapter I is an abridged version of the writer's unpublished thesis, "The Origins and Growth of Freemasonry in South Africa 1772 - 1876", submitted successfully for a Master of Arts Degree in 1980. It does however include fresh material gathered inter alia on field research trips in 1981 and 1982.

It begins with the formation of the first lodge in Southern Africa - De Goede Hoop at Cape Town in 1772, its demise in 1781 and its restart in 1794. Freemasonry received official approval in the restricted life of the Cape Colony with the arrival in 1803, on the take-over by the Batavian Government, of the Commissary-General Jacob Abraham de Mist who was also Deputy Grand Master in Holland. It tells of the expansion eastwards along the coast of English Freemasonry and dissatisfaction with rule from Cape Town and the eventual separation of English lodges into geographical districts in the 1870s and 1880s.

Netherlandic lodges increased in numbers as a result of the

missionary travels northwards in the 1860s of the Deputy Grand Master National, Sir Christoffel Brand.

The centrifugal effects of the discovery of diamonds and the growth of Kimberley on Freemasonry are recorded in Chapter 2.

Established lodges lost many members as a result of the "diamond fever", while new lodges were set up in the Diamond Fields. The first call for an independent Grand Lodge in South Africa was heard in September 1870 and, six years later, a meeting of 200 masons was held in Cape Town to discuss it - without making any progress, for the English District Grand Lodges would not at the time give up their newly-won independence. The chapter focusses on the discovery of gold and the inevitable migration to the Reef and the setting up of lodges there, climaxing with the 1895 Jameson Raid.

Many lodges disappeared but others carried on under great difficulty during the Second War of Independence (1899 - 1902) described in Chapter 3, while Chapter 4 gives a picture of international masonic relations from 1880 to 1881 and from 1899 to 1902, using hitherto unpublished material from European Grand Lodges.

Hopes for political union in the early 1900s inspired hopes for masonic union, recorded in Chapter 5. Union Day - 31 May, 1910 - came, but Freemasons were still arguing about the issue up until the outbreak of the first World War when the unity movement disappeared.

Netherlandic lodges in South Africa in the late 1800s and early 1900s faced severe testing as the Grand Lodge in the Netherlands continued to issue contentious decrees and unpopular constitutional amendments which brought about support for a Dutch South Africa Grand Lodge and a breakaway from Holland, as Chapter 6 records. By 1917, however, the Netherlands had agreed to give South African lodges a liberal

measure of self-government.

The unsuccessful rebellion of 1914 and the first world war had a considerable effect on the operation of Freemasonry in South Africa, Chapter 7 records, while Freemasons shared in the postwar euphoria when universal peace became the goal (Chapter 8). But there was as little unity in international Freemasonry as in international affairs in those years. Chapter 9 records the extraordinary growth of the Craft in South Africa after World War I and the reversal of fortunes during the depression of the 1920s. Confidence returned in the 1930s and Freemasons welcomed the political coalition in 1933 of the S.A. Party and the National Party as the "welding of the two races", Afrikaans and English speaking.

The years between the two world wars were marked by regular attacks on Freemasonry by the Dutch Reformed Church, while Freemasons in South Africa watched with horror as Mussolini and Hitler crushed the movement in Europe.

Many Freemasons served their country during the Second World War either in the field or by raising funds for the war effort, Chapter 10 recounts. The Cape Dutch Reformed Church Synodical Commission produced a report in 1940 that forced masonic leaders, who traditionally never replied to public criticism, to publish the report and their detailed reply to it in a 64-page booklet. As a result, the question of a United Grand Lodge for South Africa again receded into the background.

Chapter 11 details the emergence of an independent group, the S.A. Order of Freemasons in 1957, its attempts to win recognition and its demise in 1961. The formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in 1961, with particular reference to the international masonic scene at the time, is outlined in Chapter 12.

The Conclusion gives an overview of the masonic movement in

South Africa since its formation and suggests that a United Grand Lodge for South Africa is still remote.

This study confines itself to the historical aspects of Freemasonry in South Africa and does not endeavour to portray esoteric changes in the Craft. It has attempted to present a broad picture of the activities of the four constitutions - English, Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic, the latter to become the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in 1961 and the Grand Lodge of South Africa in 1981, and their co-operation and occasional confrontation, seen against the non-masonic events of a particular period from 1772 to 1961. The chapters are in chronological sequence, with divisions designed to indicate significant historical phases.

Research for the work began in 1977 when the writer circularised lodges and chapters of all constitutions asking for copies of early minutes, lodge histories or other information. Some 300 circulars were sent out with 150 reminders a few months later. A 40,65 per cent return of replies was received and much valuable information supplied.

I was particularly fortunate to be given first access to a great deal of unlisted, unpublished masonic material collected some years ago by the Chief Archivist, the late Col.C.Graham Botha, at the Cape Archives, Cape Town. Most of it dealt primarily with Dutch lodges. Of special importance were the hitherto unpublished complete masonic records of Sir Christoffel Brand who was Deputy Grand Master National from 1847 to 1874.

The task of classifying this material took me three years but proved rewarding research. I was also given access to unlisted masonic material at the South African Library, Cape Town.

Two study tours were made overseas, in 1979 and 1981, to visit Grand Lodges. Useful material was found relating to South

African Freemasonry in the archives and library of the United Grand Lodge of England at Free Masons Hall, London and in the library of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh. Mention must be made of the discovery of letters sent between European Grand Lodges and England at the time of the two wars of independence, 1880 to 1881 and 1899 to 1902 and included at length in this work. The archives and library of the Grand East of the Netherlands at The Hague provided illuminating hitherto unpublished background material about the formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa. Most of it again is published at length in this dissertation.

In September 1982 I toured the principal masonic centres in South Africa. At Kimberley, my first stop, I was given access to old records, some of which had been discovered when a false wall was found behind a staircase in the Kimberley masonic temple. They included comprehensive lodge records of English, Irish, Scottish and Dutch lodges, some 100 years old. In Bloemfontein I was able to research at the Masonic Centre. In Johannesburg, the Grand Secretary, Mr. Van Zyl of the Grand Lodge of South Africa, kindly opened up all records of the Grand Lodge from its formation in 1961, while his Transvaal Provincial Grand Lodge Secretary, at Orange Grove, allowed me access to original records from 1906. The English Constitution Masonic Centre at Park Lane North was a treasurehouse of old minute books and correspondence from the 1880s. Also in Johannesburg the District Grand Secretary of the Scottish Transvaal District Grand Lodge, Mr. Rennie, opened up his lodge records, dating from 1896, while I had considerable help from the Provincial Grand Lodge Irish Constitution, Johannesburg.

At Durban, Natal Scottish and Irish masonic archives were made available to me, while a journey to Pietermaritzburg, the home of the Natal English Constitution, proved rewarding. After a stopover at East London for more research, I was able in Port Elizabeth to peruse original records of the English Eastern Division from 1876.

The tour revealed that in most centres there are large gaps in masonic records. In several places I personally found records in cellars and other underground rooms, the existence of which had gone unnoticed for years. Well-kept archives were found in Kimberley, Johannesburg and Natal and these have been acknowledged in the references.

In Cape Town, the Irish, Scottish and South African Constitution authorities have very kindly opened their early records for research. As librarian and curator of the Pinelands Masonic Centre, I have been able to collect and preserve records of the District Grand Lodge English Constitution Western Division dating from 1862, which have proved useful for the work. Several local lodges have deposited their old minute books and other records with me for safekeeping. These again have been rewarding for research. Of particular importance was the discovery of virtually complete records of T.N. Cranstoun-Day, English District Grand Master for this division from 1927 to 1966.

Personal interviews with senior masons on my tours have also been very useful.

It will be noted that reference to English, Irish, Scottish, Dutch and Southern African lodges does not imply that members of these lodges are solely of that nationality or use the specified language. In fact, in today's masonic world, the majority are South African citizens using either English or Afrikaans in lodge work. The label refers to the historical origin of the particular constitution and to the ties with the respective Grand Lodge whether overseas or in South Africa.

WHAT IS FREEMASONRY?

The non-masonic reader is bound to ask from the outset:

"What is Freemasonry and what does it do?". It is not a secret society but a society with secrets - that is, secret

methods of recognition of one Freemason by another. Yet from the considerable number of exposes published in the last two centuries, the reader will soon learn all he wishes to know about these secrets and the rituals. "But what does it do?" it is often asked. Let T.N. Cranstoun-Day, District Grand Master for English Lodges in the Western Cape for nearly 40 years, reply. Stating the masonic principles he said to his District Grand Lodge on 29 April, 1965:

"Freemasonry is a charitable, benevolent, educational and religious society. Its principles are proclaimed as widely as men will hear. Its only secrets are in its methods of recognition and of symbolic instruction.

"It is charitable in that it is not organised for profit, and none of its income inures to the benefit of any individual, but all is devoted to the promotion of the welfare and happiness of mankind.

"It is benevolent in that it teaches and exemplifies altruism as a duty.

"It is educational in that it teaches by prescribed ceremonials a system of morality and brotherhood based upon the Sacred Law.

"It is religious in that it requires a belief in God, the Creator of the Universe - that is essential: The volume of the Sacred Law (The Holy Bible) is open upon its altars whenever a Lodge is in session; reverence for God is ever present in its ceremonies, and to its brethren are constantly addressed lessons of morality; but it is not sectarian nor theological.

"It is a social organisation only so far as it furnishes additional inducement for men to foregather in numbers, thereby providing more material for its primary work of education, of spiritual uplift and of charity.

"Through the improvement and strengthening of the character of the individual man, Freemasonry seeks to improve the community. Thus it impresses upon its members the principle of personal integrity and personal responsibility; enlightens them as to those things which make for human welfare, and

inspires them with that feeling of charity, or goodwill towards their fellow men which move them to translate principle and conviction into action.

"To that end it stands for obedience to God's law; for truth and justice; fraternity and philanthropy; and enlightenment and orderly liberty, civil, religious and intellectual.

"It charges each of its members to be true and loyal to the government of the country to which he owes allegiance, and to be obedient to the law of any State in which he may be.

"It believes that the attainment of these objectives is best accomplished by having a broad basis of principle upon which men of every race, country and opinion may unite rather than by setting up a restricted platform upon which only those of certain creeds, races and opinions can assemble.

"Believing these things it adheres to that ancient and approved rule of Freemasonry which forbids the discussion in Masonic meetings of creeds, politics, or other topics likely to excite personal animosities.

"It further affirms its conviction that it is not only contrary to the fundamental principles of the Craft, but dangerous to its unity, strength, usefulness and welfare, for Masonic bodies to take action or to attempt to exercise pressure or influence for or against any legislation, or in any way to attempt to procure the election or appointment of Government officials, or to influence them - whether members of the Craft or not - in the performance of their official duties. The true Freemason will act in civil life according to his individual judgment and the dictates of his conscience.

"We have never been aggressors, nor sought to dominate; or to deny to any man the right to hold to his own faith; his convictions; the choice of his associates; and his way of life", said Cranstoun-Day.

The historical origins of the Craft are briefly outlined in Chapter I.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research and the writing of this dissertation would not have been possible without the invaluable advice and constructive criticism given at all times in a courteous manner by my supervisor, Professor Kotzé of the Department of History at the University of Stellenbosch. He stressed the importance of thorough research, a critical evaluation of the material, objective interpretation, a satisfactory synthesis and precise formulation.

I also sincerely appreciate the contribution made by the two co-examiners: Professor D.J. van Zyl of Stellenbosch and Professor E.L.P. Stals of Rand Afrikaans University.

I gratefully acknowledge the generous financial assistance given to me by the Human Sciences Research Council which enabled me to tour South African masonic centres in 1982.

I record my sincere appreciation to the South African Library and the Cape Archives for allowing me access to masonic records in their possession. Of particular value was the co-operation of the librarian and archivists at Freemasons Hall, London, at the Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh and at the Grand East of the Netherlands at The Hague.

I was given every opportunity to peruse records at masonic district, provincial and Grand Lodge centres throughout South Africa, and my gratitude to those officials can never be overstated. Without their assistance this dissertation could never have been written.

It is the person who interpreted my handwriting and put the words on paper in legible form who ultimately deserves great credit. That person is my wife, May Cooper, whose encouragement and patience earns her special recognition in these acknowledgements.

ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Cape Archives
DGL	District Grand Lodge
DGL WD EC	District Grand Lodge Western Division English Constitution
DGL ED EC	District Grand Lodge Eastern Division English Constitution
DGL NATAL EC	District Grand Lodge Natal English Constitution
DGL CD EC	District Grand Lodge Central Division English Constitution
DGL TVL EC	District Grand Lodge Transvaal English Constitution
DGMN NC	Deputy Grand Master National Netherlandic Constitution
DGL TVL SC	District Grand Lodge Transvaal and Orange Free State Scottish Constitution
DGL WP SC	District Grand Lodge Western Province Scottish Constitution
DGS	District Grand Secretary
Lodge DGH	Lodge De Goede Hoop
Lodge DGT	Lodge De Goede Trouw
EC	English Constitution
SC	Scottish Constitution
IC	Irish Constitution
NC	Netherlandic Constitution
SA	Southern African Constitution; South Africa from 1981
FMH	Freemasons Hall London Archives
GEN	Grand East of the Netherlands (Grand Lodge) Archives, The Hague
GLSA	Grand Lodge of Southern Africa (South Africa from 1981) Archives, Johannesburg
GLS	Grand Lodge of Scotland Archives, Edinburgh
GS	Grand Secretary
KEA	Kimberley English Constitution Archives Kimberley
MEF	Masonic Education Fund, Cape Town
NGK	N.G.Kerk Archives, Cape Town
NEA	Natal English Constitution Archives, Pietermaritzburg

NIA	Natal Irish Constitution Archives, Durban
NSA	Natal Scottish Constitution Archives, Durban
PGL SA EC	Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa English Constitution 1826 - 1848, 1863 - 1866, then designated District of South Africa 1866 - 1877 until sub-division in 1877
PGL NATAL IC	Provincial Grand Lodge Natal Irish Constitution
PGL SA NC	Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa Netherlandic Constitution
PGL TVL NC	Provincial Grand Lodge Transvaal Netherlandic Constitution
PGL (Tvl excepted) NC	Provincial Grand Lodge (Transvaal excepted) Netherlandic Constitution
PMC	Pinelands Masonic Centre Archives, Cape Town.
TEA	Transvaal English Constitution Archives, Johannesburg
TIA	Transvaal Irish Constitution Archives, Johannesburg
TSA	Transvaal Scottish Constitution Archives, Johannesburg.
UGLE	United Grand Lodge of England
DSAB	Dictionary of South African Biography
SESA	Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa

GLOSSARY

- CHAPTER:** A masonic body set up for the practice of the so-called side or "high" degrees.
- CRAFT, ORDER:** Terms used for the mainstream of Freemasonry which involves the first three degrees.
- DEGREE:** There are three degrees in Craft Freemasonry: entered apprentice, fellowcraft and master mason. They indicate the level of development as a mason. A candidate is initiated into the first degree, "passed" to the second and "raised" to the third; The so-called side or high degrees have no connection with the Craft degrees.
- DEPUTY GRAND MASTER NATIONAL:** The official deputed by the Netherlandic Grand Lodge to run masonic affairs in South Africa. This title was later changed to Deputy Grand Master. He outranked provincial grand masters in his area.
- ENTERED APPRENTICE:** A mason having been initiated into the first degree.
- ERASED:** Lodges are erased or struck off Grand Lodge rolls after becoming defunct or for misbehaviour.
- FELLOWCRAFT:** A mason having been passed to the second degree.
- GRAND LODGE:** The supreme authority for a group of lodges, in this instance, based either in England, Scotland, Ireland, the Netherlands, or from 1961 in South Africa. It devolves some of its authority to provincial or district lodges which are governed by provincial or district grand masters.
- GRAND EAST:** Another term for a Grand Lodge, usually located in Europe.

- MASTER: A mason elected to administer a lodge for a stated period, usually a year.
- MASTER MASON: A mason having been raised to the third degree.
- WARRANTED: On its petition being accepted a new lodge receives a warrant, sometimes called a charter, from its Grand Lodge certifying its legality.
- WARDEN
- DEACON
- ORATOR
- CHAPLAIN
- DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES
- TYLER Officers of a lodge.
- WORKINGS: The masonic activities of a lodge as opposed to its social side.

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF FREEMASONRY IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM 1772.

Today's speculative Freemasonry owes its origins to the ancient trade of stone masons and its underlying philosophy to the 18th Century Enlightenment. Freemasonry in the days of operative stone masons was both protective and instructive. It ensured that a trained mason could obtain work at fair value and that apprentices and fellows would be taught the required skills. The present 'Accepted' and 'Speculative' Freemasonry, which has not for two centuries been connected with the art of building, has continued along this dual path - benevolence and instruction; it has ensured financial protection of its members and their families on the one hand and, on the other, pursued the course of 'teaching' of higher moral values by ritual.

A masonic historian, E. Smith, has written : "Masonry is a system of morality based on a belief in the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the brotherhood of man: therefore, no atheist can be made a mason. It strives to teach a man the duty he owes to God, to his country, to his family, to his neighbour and to himself. It inculcates the practice of every virtue and makes an extensive use of symbolism in its teachings. It interferes with neither religion nor politics but strives only after light and truth, endeavouring always to bring out the highest and noblest qualities of men".¹

HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The historical origins of Freemasonry can be traced to the development of the trade of stone masons in Britain from the 11th century. Two paths can be defined - the guild and the lodge organisation.

1. E. Smith: Grand Lodge of Scotland Year Book, 1976, p.98.

GUILD ORGANISATION

Harry Carr writes that "the social, economic and industrial history of England from the 11th to the 16th century is largely interwoven with the rise of development of gild (guild) organisations".² The guilds in England, Scotland and in Europe generally began as voluntary associations of people in a particular locality joined together for their common good. Primarily they were based on a strong fraternity element and in their earliest forms they usually embraced some special objective - religious, social, benevolent or defensive.

Religious guilds began to predominate in England by the end of the 14th century, primarily as charitable institutions. From these arose the craft guilds, associations of men engaged in a particular craft or trade for the protection of mutual interests and for obtaining the rights of self-government in regulating their trade or craft.³

LODGE ORGANISATION

In England, there is evidence of some sort of lodge development before the 16th century, in this case among the itinerant masons working at every building of note outside the towns. Operative masonry as a skilled trade developed during the early years of the 11th century when the Saxons began to build a number of churches. It was given great impetus in the period following the Norman Conquest when some 5000 churches were built in England. The similarity in size, proportion and general layout of those still existing suggests the existence of the extensive use of some common knowledge of building, perhaps passed on by the movement of itinerant masons from one site to another.

2. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p.3.
(H.Carr: Freemasonry before Grand Lodge).

3. Ibid.

It is assumed the mason was his own designer and architect but later, about 1350, clerics took on the task of design. As a result of this intensive building activity, masonic customs emerged, centred around the lodge. The word 'lodge', which appears in documents of the 13th century, described the workshop or hut found on all sizeable building works in which the masons worked, stored their tools, ate their meals and slept.⁴

Two features of the craft at that time are believed to have led to the introduction of an esoteric element. Firstly, as masons moved from one job to another, they had to prove to a 'lodge' of strangers they were genuine. While their ability at work could be tested by their employer, they had to show to their fellow stone masons by some secret sign they were familiar with the 'secret' skills of a mason. Secondly, the body of masons at an isolated building site often formed a community distinct from the townspeople. This isolation cemented their loyalty to their trade and their lodge and encouraged this secretiveness, the use of passwords and signs and the teaching of rudimentary moral instruction.⁵

At places where building was continuously in progress, the lodge acquired a more permanent nature and authority. This continuity of employment in one place eventually gave the meaning to a 'lodge' not of a hut but of a group of masons attached to a building.

These operative lodges in England were still wholly under the control of the authorities they served. They exercised no trade controls. They were governed, not governing bodies, ruled by royal, noble or clerical masters. Gradually, however, these lodges in both town and district became permanent independent associations of working masons. Both English and Scottish lodges performed simple ceremonies to initiate new

4. F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight (eds.): Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 22, 25.

5. Ibid., pp. 23, 24.

apprentices and to pass them later, on reaching a higher stage of efficiency in the trade, as 'fellows' or 'fellowcraftsmen'. The two stages or 'degrees' remained for some years until a third - the master mason - was introduced.⁶

ACCEPTED MASONS

The point at which operative or working masonry became non-operative or 'accepted' is disputed among masonic historians. L. Vibert argues that operative masons at a very early stage allowed persons who were not working men to participate in their 'mysteries' or secrets. These non-operatives were excused the terms of apprenticeship and the test, if any, imposed on the would-be fellow. They were spoken of as 'accepted'.⁷ Pick and Knight however write that there are "records of individuals connected with the craft of masonry but not themselves practising it" from about 1600 only. The operative craft of 1600 finally gave way to the 'accepted' or 'speculative' side by the middle of the 18th century, they add.⁸

Two factors were at work to create the situation in the late 17th century where 'accepted' or non-operative masons began to predominate in lodges. Firstly a decrease in building activity resulted in a drop in the number of working masons. Secondly, masonic lodges acquired a popularity among the middle and upper classes.

Dr. Robert Plot, in his Natural History of Staffordshire in 1686 wrote: "... the Customs relating to the County ... of admitting men into the Society of Free Masons ... though I find the

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6. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, pp. 12 - 19 (H. Carr: Freemasonry before Grand Lodge).
 7. Quatuor Coronati Lodge Transactions, 1976, p. 256 (L. Vibert: A Lodge in the 14th Century).
 8. F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight (eds.): Pocket History of Freemasonry, p. 50.

Custom spread more or less over the Nation for here I found persons of the most eminent quality that did not disdain to be of this Fellowship".⁹

Initially these 'accepted' lodges were social meeting places but there is evidence of some ritual working in them and some element of moral instruction given. There was little attempt to create any overall organisation until 1716 when four London lodges met to establish themselves under a Grand Master so that regular joint meetings could be held. This meeting was at the Apple Tree Tavern in Covent Garden. The masons decided to constitute themselves a Grand Lodge the following year and resolved to hold an annual assembly and feast every St. John the Baptist's Day on 2 June. Next year the Grand Lodge was duly formed on that day and Anthony Sayer was made Grand Master.¹⁰ Two years later the Grand Lodge of Ireland was instituted and that of Scotland in 1736 and close contact between all three was established. Their influence spread rapidly throughout these countries and eventually across to the Continent.¹¹

Freemasonry enjoyed a remarkable growth in the 18th century. Its members, mainly middle and upper class, were rationalists and deists, products of the philosophies of the Enlightenment then sweeping Europe. They sought in lodges new closed institutions where they could enjoy religious toleration and practise the application of reason to a mathematically ordered universe. These same views encouraged the growth of the 'speculative' or the element of moral instruction in Freemasonry which was represented eventually through the creation of

9. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p.26
(H. Carr: Freemasonry before Grand Lodge, quoting Plot).

10. F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 78 - 79.

11. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p. 82
(T.O. Haunch: The Formation 1717 - 1851).

elaborate rituals drawn from the early operative ceremonies.¹²

With the increase in lodges in England, the Premier Grand Lodge extended its sphere of influence and authority from London. By 1725 its jurisdiction extended over 64 lodges in England. Within the next two years the first oversea lodges were constituted in Bengal, Gibraltar and Madrid, mainly by military lodges. By 1732 there were 102 lodges under the Grand Lodge.¹³ As Freemasonry grew in Britain it attracted interest through its public processions and press notices. This brought a profusion of broadsheets, pamphlets and newspaper articles on masons and Freemasonry, some favourable but the majority hostile. Exposures pretending to reveal the secrets or 'mysteries' of the craft were published while another problem for Grand Lodge was the increase in the 'irregular' making of masons by unrecognised ritual. The concern of Grand Lodge increased so much so that, by the end of the 1730s to confuse these masonic imposters, it transposed modes of recognition, specifically the ritual passwords used to identify one mason to another.¹⁴

This change in ritual became one of the main issues in the resulting schism between the Premier Grand Lodge and a rival Grand Lodge formed in 1751, later to be called the 'Antients' - claiming to be traditionalists who had banded together to defend the 'antient' practices. On 14 September, 1752, representatives of nine lodges met to form a Grand Committee of Antient Masons and in December 1753, a Grand Master, Robert

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12. Sir Alfred Robbins: English Speaking Freemasonry, pp. 15 - 23; L.W. Cowie: 18th Century Europe, pp. 23 - 24; B.E. Jones: Freemasons' Guide and Compendium, pp. 98, 105 - 106; A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, pp. 51 - 53 (T.O. Haunch: The Formation 1717 - 1751); A.R. Humphreys: The Augustan World, Life and Letters in 18th Century England, pp. 1 - 2, 183 - 216; M.C. Jacobs: The Radical Enlightenment, Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans, pp. 109-110, 112-115, 121-137, 142-143
 13. F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, p.96.
 14. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, pp. 77-78 (T.O. Haunch: The Formation 1717 - 1751).

Turner, was chosen. By the next year there were 36 lodges on the Antients' register with 1014 members. Seventeen years later there were 74 Antient lodges in London, 83 country lodges and 43 in overseas countries. In that same year, 1771, the 'Moderns' or the original Premier Grand Lodge, had 157 lodges in London, 164 country and 100 overseas lodges.¹⁵

The hostility between the two Grand Lodges lasted for nearly half a century. Finally, after several unsuccessful attempts at reconciliation, the 'Moderns' and 'Antients' settled their differences which had been mainly over ritual, in 1813 to form a United Grand Lodge of England.¹⁶

FREEMASONRY IN SOUTH AFRICA

From England, Freemasonry spread to Holland in 1731 and eventually, through officials of the Dutch East India Company, to the Cape and other areas of the Company's influence. This masonic expansion was facilitated by the appointment by the Dutch central body, the Grand East of the Netherlands, of Deputy Grand Masters with roving commissions.

One of these, a sea captain, Captain Abraham van der Weyde (or Weijde) arrived at the Cape on 24 April, 1772 and invoked a meeting on 2 May, 1772 when ten masons assembled under his presidency and the master and officers were elected. Two days later he issued a provisional warrant of authority subject to Holland's approval and the Lodge De Goede Hoop, the first in South Africa, came into being.¹⁷

Cape Town in the latter half of the 18th century was a commercial centre, the local headquarters of the Dutch East

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15. F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 102 - 106.
 16. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p. 129 (P.R. James: The Union and After).
 17. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. xix.

India Company, a port of call under careful control because of the Company's rigid monopoly of imports and exports. There were two broad classes among the whites - the Company official and the free burgher. Company servants were not allowed to trade themselves nor to own land until they were released from their contracts, allowed to settle in the Cape and become free burghers. Similarly the Company imposed rigid but profitable controls on free burghers engaged in trades or agriculture.

Company restrictions also extended to social life, for in 1755 Governor Ryk Tulbagh had set out strict orders for social standing and etiquette. At the three levels - political, economic and social - the Company thus maintained its authority with the force of its law.¹⁸

A young man, Abraham Chiron, a Company servant sent from Holland for his five years' service, joined this stultified society in 1769. The year after his arrival, on 23 September, 1770 he married Marie Philippine Roger of Sedan, and they later had four children.¹⁹ Born in Frankfurt-am-Main, Chiron had become a member of the Zur Einigkeit masonic lodge there in 1765 and was later to become the first master of the first lodge in Southern Africa, De Goede Hoop in Cape Town in 1772.²⁰

The new lodge depended for its existence on visitors, conferring numerous degrees but failing to attract residents, particularly because of the social and religious mores of the confined Cape society. Chiron, in a letter to the Grand East of the Netherlands in June 1774, gave reasons for the lodge's

18. E.A. Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd Ed., pp. 100 - 101; M.W. Spilhaus: South Africa in the Making, 1652 - 1806, pp. 108 - 109.

19. J.Hoge: Personalia of the Germans at the Cape, p.58.

20. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 1.

lack of progress.

Firstly, Chiron said that 'warnings from the pulpit' had caused wives to persuade their husbands to hold aloof from Freemasonry. The clergymen in the Cape presumably saw masonry not only as a threat to their authority over the male section of their congregation, those who could become masons, but somewhat mistakenly viewed it as a rival religious body which indoctrinated its members in the principles of deism and induced them to forswear the established church under oaths of secrecy.²¹

Lodge De Goede Hoop was further condemned for its application of the principles of equality among members meeting within the lodge, as Chiron pointed out in his letter.

In Lodge De Goede Hoop, Company officials of different rank and free burghers were meeting in secrecy to practise those 'Enlightened' principles which could then be seen as a danger to the stratified society at the Cape. "Since people in the Indies set great store by rank", wrote Bate, "men were urged not to join an order that put forward equality as one of its maxims lest it should injure their standing in the estimation of others".²² Apparently the wives of the few resident masons took exception to this masonic teaching which conflicted with the company's rigid rules of social precedence.

As a result of these pressures and lack of candidates, Lodge De Goede Hoop went into recess from April 1781.²³ The minute book ends on 24 April, 1781 with the remark "Temporary suspension owing to paucity of members".²⁴

A few years later, in 1794, De Goede Hoop members began work again, this time with more confidence as they attracted many prominent officials of the company as members, such as

21. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 7.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 17.

24. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Letter Books: 1877-1888, Record of Archives.

Johannes Andreas Truter, later Chief Justice, and were thus ensured of protection from Company and pulpit. Again the fact that most of their initiates were now South African born and were permanently resident in the Cape, ensured further stability.²⁵

Under the British occupation of 1795 military lodges attached to British regiments arrived at the Cape. They brought new interest in the Craft, encouraging civilians both English and Dutch to apply for admission or set up new lodges.²⁶

A military lodge, Africa No.1. or De Afrikaan was given authority to meet on 29 January, 1798 by De Goede Hoop, now the doyen of lodges of the Cape.²⁷ Some of its members left to form another Dutch lodge, De Goede Trouw in 1800.²⁸ In the same year Richard Blake, private secretary to the then Governor of the Cape, Sir George Yonge, formed the Royal York Lodge, the first non-military lodge owing allegiance to England. It attracted senior officers of the garrison and business and professional men but was short lived, expiring in 1801.²⁹

Further impetus to Freemasonry in the Cape came with the takeover of the Colony by the Batavian Republic in 1802 and the arrival in 1803 of the Head of Government, Commissary-General Jacob Abraham de Mist, who was also Deputy Grand Master in Holland and who became the first Deputy Grand Master National Netherlandic Constitution for South Africa (1803 - 1804). His masonic task was to investigate conditions in the Cape lodges, set them to order and end division. In an epistle to the Dutch Grand Lodge De Mist pointed to the

25. O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 20 - 21.

26. Ibid., p. 26.

27. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: The British Lodge No. 334 and English Freemasonry at the Cape of Good Hope, 1795-1935, p.3

28. F.T.R. Griesbach: History of Lodge De Goede Trouw 1811 - 1906, p.6.

29. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 6 - 7.

usefulness of Freemasonry in the Cape in the prevention of schisms.³⁰

Prior to his return home De Mist appointed Johannes Andreas Truter, later Sir John Truter, a member of De Goede Hoop Lodge, as his successor as Deputy Grand Master National for South Africa (1804-1845), and also in the non-masonic world as Secretary to the Governor's Council of Policy (Raad van Politie).³¹

British military lodges arrived with their regiments during the Second British occupation (1806-1814). Truter found a masonic ally in the Commander-in-Chief, Major General David Baird, Colonel of the 24th Regiment, also a mason, welcoming him to De Goede Hoop as Protector.³² However the influx of English-speaking members into his lodge brought tensions and an inevitable split when English members broke away to form the first permanent English lodge in the Cape, The British Lodge in 1811.³³

Socially, the founders of British Lodge were of a different class to most members of De Goede Hoop who had retained their high positions in the Cape administration now under British rule. They were drawn from the growing group of tradesmen, merchants and skilled men now coming to the Cape.³⁴

By the 1820s, there were three English lodges in Cape Town: British, Union (established in 1812) and The Hope (established in 1821).³⁵ The arrival of English settlers in the Eastern

30. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, pp. 38 - 42.

31. C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa, p.7; O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, pp. 41 - 42.

32. CA ACC 731, 1/1/2 Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes September 1805 - July 1809: 24 January, 1806.

33. FMH UGLE, File SN 1584 British Lodge: Petition 26 April, 1811.

34. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 12 - 13.

35. Ibid., pp. 15 -16, 32.



SIR JOHANNES ANDREAS TRUTER

Second Deputy Grand Master National Netherlandic Constitution for South Africa, 1804 - 1845; Second English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa, 1826 - 1833. He succeeded Richard Blake the first English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa (1801 - 1804)

Province in the 1820s eventually saw the formation of Albany Lodge at Grahamstown in 1828.³⁶

De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw represented Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa but were eventually supported by Lodge De Vereeniging at Graaff-Reinet, formed in 1834.³⁷

A French lodge, L'Esperance, was warranted by the Grand Orient of France in Cape Town at the request of De Goede Hoop members in 1824 but ceased to operate about 1841.³⁸

The Dutch lodges were under a common authority, that of the Deputy District Grand Master National Truter. He had succeeded De Mist. But the English lodges had no such authority until, at the request of the United Grand Lodge of England, Truter agreed to take on another title - that of the English Provincial Grand Master in South Africa, in 1826.³⁹ He constituted his Provincial Grand Lodge only in 1829 and finally resigned his English appointment in 1833, handing over to Clerke Burton.⁴⁰

Disenchantment with political rule from Cape Town growing among the settler population in the Eastern area was mirrored among lodge members there who campaigned to remain independent of edicts issued by the masonic authorities in Cape Town. The ringleader, Albany Lodge, refused to acknowledge the English Provincial Grand Lodge and only accepted local rule in 1878.⁴¹

The years 1828 to 1850 were uneasy times for the Cape Colony and the Craft. The continuing frontier conflicts in 1819, 1834 and 1846, and the exodus of thousands of farmers in the

36. C.G. Dru Drury: Records of Albany Lodge, Grahamstown, pp. 12 - 13.

37. CA ACC 731, 1/1/8 De Goede Hoop Minutes June 1835 - June 1840: 3 August, 1837.

38. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.51.

39. CA A 2257 Vol.3 Provincial Grand Master EC: Patent of Appointment, January 1826.

40. PMC 3/1/3 British Lodge Minute Books 31 December 1824 - 26 December 1840: Meeting 13 April, 1831, 14 December 1831.

41. C.G. Dru Drury: Albany Lodge, pp. 28 - 36.

Great Trek (1835-1838), the political and social unrest arising from, inter alia, the introduction of humanitarian legislation giving Hottentots equal status with Whites, the abolition of slavery in 1834, and continuing Anglicisation of school, church and the administration, accentuated tensions between the Dutch burghers and the British authorities, and within these communities. Added to these was the general economic stagnation in the Colony with the depreciation of the rix dollar and the growth of the public debt.⁴²

Freemasonry was not impervious to these events. Many masons, both English and Dutch, had to resign, unable to pay their dues. Expansion of the Craft seemed impossible while the outlying lodges - Albany and De Vereeniging - often did not meet.

Internal schisms among members and differences between lodges handicapped masonic progress, reflecting the continuing English-Dutch rivalry in the economic and political fields. English and Dutch lodges were both affected.⁴³

By 1848 both the English and Dutch Provincial Grand Lodges had lapsed through lack of interest. At the start of the 1850s there were four lodges in South Africa accepting the authority of the United Grand Lodge of England - British, The Hope (erased in 1871), Union (erased in 1857), all in Cape Town, and Albany in Grahamstown. The Dutch lodges were De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw in Cape Town. De Vereeniging in Graaff-Reinet succumbed in 1844 after a few years' life.⁴⁴

This sorry picture was to change through several factors. The Cape began to enjoy relative prosperity from the 1850s.⁴⁵ Increased immigration of English settlers, commercial

42. E.A. Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd Edition, pp. 158-160.

43. A.A. Cooper: Origins and Growth of Freemasonry in South Africa 1772 - 1876 (unpublished M.A. thesis), pp.100-111.

44. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp.16, 102;
O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 78.

45. C.G.W.Schumann: Structural Change and Business Cycles in South Africa, 1806 - 1936, p. 105.

expansion along the eastern coast and the opening up of Natal were contributory causes to the revitalisation of the Craft through the spread of new lodges to the east and north. Equally important to this upsurge was the appointment in 1847 of Christoffel Brand, later Sir Christoffel Brand, as Deputy Grand Master National of the Dutch lodges, who ventured north on several missionary tours to open up new lodges.⁴⁶

ENGLISH EXPANSION

The English Constitution first spread outward with the formation of Lodge Zetland at Fort Beaufort in 1852 and Lodge Goodwill in Port Elizabeth in 1857. Masons from Cape Town, attracted by the commercial opportunities in the Crown Colony of Natal, created in 1857, joined with British emigrants to open the first lodge there - Port Natal at Durban - in 1858 which in turn sponsored the Prince Alfred Lodge in Pietermaritzburg in 1863. Further English lodges were warranted in the early 1860s. St. Johns, Grahamstown in 1860, and British Kaffrarian, King William's Town, in 1861, both owed their origin to the stationing of military personnel in those towns during the Eastern Frontier Wars. Most British regiments had lodges attached.

The development of Port Elizabeth's trade and the influx of population saw the start of another lodge, Good Hope, there in 1861 sponsored by the resident Lodge Goodwill. In the 1860s five other English lodges were founded in the Cape: Midlands at Graaff-Reinet in 1861, Joppa at Cape Town in 1861, Union at Knysna and Star in the East in Queenstown, both in 1862 and St. Pauls in Adelaide in 1863.⁴⁷

46. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 87.

47. FMH UGLE Record of Warrants and Petitions South Africa 1812 - 1900; T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 61; A.A. Cooper: Origins and Growth of Freemasonry in South Africa 1772 - 1876 (unpublished M.A. Thesis) pp. 147 - 148.

Factors for the expansion undoubtedly included the growth of the population along the eastern coast and the increasing trade, bringing many enthusiastic masons from Cape Town. Yet the formation of most of these lodges stemmed directly from local movements, owing nothing to deliberate campaigning by the central authority as was the case with the majority of the Netherlandic lodges created in the 1860s. English Freemasonry had no leader at that time. Its last Provincial Grand Master, Clerke Burton, had died in 1848.⁴⁸ Since then, the senior English lodge, the British, had acted as an unofficial Provincial Grand Lodge. Giving advice to embryo lodges it steadfastly refused any suggestion that a successor to Clerke Burton be appointed. With the addition of new lodges, English Freemasonry sorely needed a central authority, while its status as a constitution suffered in comparison to the Netherlandic which had had its own head since 1804. Eventually British Lodge weakened and, in 1862, a conference in Cape Town of English lodges nominated Richard Southey, past master of The Hope Lodge, as Provincial Grand Master for South Africa.⁴⁹ Then Treasurer-General of the Colony, Southey was a determined expansionist, always eager to extend British authority, as he was to demonstrate as Colonial Secretary from 1864. But his duties did not allow him much time for extension of masonic authority, to the detriment of English Freemasonry. He was appointed by London as Provincial Grand Master for the Cape by letter of 5 March, 1863.⁵⁰

48. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 59.

49. FMH UGLE File SN 1584, British Lodge: Fairbridge - Grand Master, Memorial, 5 August, 1862.

50. CA ACC 611, Vol.2 Southey Papers, Letters Received: Freemasons Hall - Southey, 5 March, 1863.



SIR CHRISTOFFEL JOSEPH BRAND
Third Deputy Grand Master National Netherlands
Constitution for South Africa, 1847 - 1874.

DUTCH EXPANSION

The head of the Netherlandic Constitution, Sir Christoffel Brand as Deputy Grand Master National from 1847 to 1874, was of a different calibre. Ruling virtually as a dictator, Brand had only in 1864 created a weak masonic administration around him, unlike Southey whose first task on appointment was to select a strong Provincial Grand Lodge in the same year to support him and act for him while he was on Government business.⁵¹

Brand, elected Speaker of the first Cape Legislative Assembly in 1854, brought his talent for mediation into his masonic work, constantly attempting to keep the peace between the two language groups but concerned that the increase of English-speaking masons would bring the adoption of English in Dutch lodges under his jurisdiction. As editor of De Zuid-Afrikaan, the newspaper he and others had founded to protect their culture, language and other interests, he had constantly opposed the spread of the use of English, particularly in preaching.⁵² In the masonic sphere, concerned about the sudden growth of English Freemasonry, he was moved in 1861 to embark on the first of his unique 'missionary' travels into the interior of South Africa to encourage Dutch Freemasonry. At that time he had only two active Dutch lodges under his jurisdiction - De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw, both in Cape Town and both with falling membership, unlike the booming English lodges.

He was particularly upset when a group of English-speaking members of De Goede Hoop broke away to form the first Scottish Constitution Lodge in South Africa, Southern Cross, in 1860. The petitioners, led by John Saunders, gave as their reason for division that, as the business of De Goede

51. PMC District Grand Lodge 1/1/1 Minute Book 15 April 1864 - 16 March 1871: meeting 15 April, 1864.

52. DSAB II, pp. 78 - 83 (H.C. Botha: Sir Christoffel Brand

Hoop was principally conducted in the Dutch language, they wanted to work in a language they all understood.⁵³

On hearing of this petition, Brand found his peacemaking role in the language question, which had bulked so large in public as well as masonic affairs, severely tested. He opposed the petition, fearing that the increase of English-speaking masons would cause the adoption of the English language in Dutch lodges under his jurisdiction as the older Dutch speaking masons died.⁵⁴

Setting off eastwards in 1861, Brand travelled through George on to Grahamstown and then north to Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State Republic. The next year brought the first fruit of his travels. Rising Star at Burghersdorp applied for a warrant to work in English as there were several English and Scots masons in the town. This time he agreed.⁵⁵ Once warranted, Rising Star had to postpone its work because of "the heavy drought and great oppression in all branches of the trade", its circumstances reflecting local conditions in that area of the Cape Colony.⁵⁶

The next year several petitions for lodges came in. F.A. Swemmer headed one from George Town (George) for the proposed Star in the East. Its charter was granted on 10 January, 1863 and the master invested by Johan Gustaf Aspeling, "Knight of the Sword", his rank referring to the Rose Croix degree.⁵⁷

53. W.S. Bryant: History Southern Cross, p. 1.

54. Ibid.

55. CA A2223 Vol.8, DGMN, Letters Received January 1861 - December 1862: Burghersdorp Petition, 9 June, 1862.

56. Ibid., Rising Star - Brand, 15 December, 1862.

57. CA A2223 Vol. 9, DGMN, Letters Received January 1863 - December, 1863: George Lodge - Brand, 12 February, 1863.

More lodges came in next year. L'Astre De L'Orient at Stellenbosch was provisionally warranted in March, 1863.⁵⁸ In that same month Brand received a petition for the first lodge in the Free State, Unie at Bloemfontein.⁵⁹ Heading the list of petitioners was Marthinus Wessel Pretorius, a son of the Voortrekker leader, Andries Pretorius. President of the Free State from 8 February, 1860 to 15 April, 1863 and later President of the S.A. Republic from 1864 to 1870, he had supported the move for a Dutch lodge to counter the desire of British traders in the town to have a lodge under the United Grand Lodge of England and working in English.⁶⁰ President Pretorius was initiated as a mason at De Goede Hoop Lodge on 27 June, 1862.⁶¹

The situation in Bloemfontein was indicative of the close competition between Dutch and English masons to form new lodges in the north, their allegiance drawn from their particular language.

Brand on his tour consecrated Lodge Unie on 15 October, 1864 but not without difficulty for he found there were not sufficient Dutch masons to form a properly constituted lodge. Undeterred, he called on English masons who had just formed Lodge Rising Star in Bloemfontein to help him make up numbers and initiated eleven masons.⁶² This was a most unusual procedure but indicative of Brand's eagerness to establish harmony between the two language groups. Six of the new masons were from Holland, one was from Germany and the remaining four from

58. CA A 2263 Vol.28, PGL NC, Diverse Papers: Nominal Register Lodges 1874 - 1875.

59. CA A 2223 Vol. 9, DGMN, Letters Received January 1863 - December, 1863: Petition, Unie Lodge - Brand, 10 March, 1863.

60. Ibid., Blanch - Brand, 14 January, 1863; Blanch - Brand, 27 February, 1863; O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 93.

61. O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 93.

62. J. Luke: Early History of Lodge Unie, Bloemfontein (typewritten) p. 1.

South Africa, all leading citizens of Bloemfontein. They included J.C. Nielen Marais, later Secretary of State of the Republic, and A.B. Roberts, Attorney General.⁶³ Candidates at the start were numerous, coming from such places as Nethulie, Smithfield, Philippolis, Fauresmith and Harrismith. A year after its consecration, on 5 April, 1865, Unie Lodge was privileged to have the President of the Orange Free State, Jan Brand, son of Sir Christoffel Brand, lay the foundation stone of its proposed temple.⁶⁴ Brand, a mason initiated into De Goede Hoop Lodge in November, 1842, was assiduous in his masonic duties.⁶⁵ On 27 December, 1865, he laid the foundation stone of the proposed temple for the rival English Lodge Rising Star and regularly attended meetings of both lodges.⁶⁶ Rising Star had been granted a warrant by the English Provincial Grand Master, Southey, on 31 May, 1864 as the English masons in Bloemfontein wanted a ritual in English and not Dutch.⁶⁷ But the warrant took a long time to come from London and the lodge was only formally constituted on 4 January, 1865, 17 years after the foundation of Bloemfontein.⁶⁸ The lodge minutes allege the delay was due to the apathy and neglect of the Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town.⁶⁹

The two lodges, Unie and Rising Star, must have had difficulty in filling their respective offices. A Dutch mason, R. Blanch, informed Brand in January, 1863 "there were only 25 willing masons in the whole of the Free State with 14 of them in Bloemfontein".⁷⁰

63. J. Luke: Early History of Lodge Unie, Bloemfontein, (typewritten), pp. 2 - 3.

64. Ibid., p.4.

65. O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop Lodge, p. 200.

66. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years, a Brief History of Rising Star Lodge, Bloemfontein, 1864 - 1945, p. 14.

67. Ibid., pp. 10 - 11.

68. Ibid., p. 11.

69. Ibid.

70. CA A 2223 Vol. 9, DGMN, Letters Received January 1863 - December 1863: Blanch - Brand, 14 January, 1863.

The scarcity of masons in the area was compounded with the border clashes with the Basutos under Moshesh in the early 1860s. The Basutos settled as much as 20 miles inside the Republic's borders, warring constantly with local farmers. Eventually President Brand persuaded the Governor of the Cape, Sir Philip Wodehouse, to arbitrate and Moshesh agreed. In October, 1864, the old Warden line was confirmed with minor alterations, to illustrate that the Basuto and not the burghers were the aggressors and had for years been encroaching on European territory.⁷¹ As every able-bodied man between 16 and 60 was required to defend the republic and go out on commando, attendances at lodges were often interrupted by these clashes.⁷² When war with the Basutos broke out in 1865, the majority of members of the English Lodge, Rising Star, in Bloemfontein went out on commando and meetings were postponed until January, 1866.⁷³ Its sister lodge, Unie, also suffered as a result of the Basuto War with its members out on commando.⁷⁴

The S.A. Republic was soon drawn into the war after the murder of some Transvaal transport riders by the Basuto.⁷⁵ Flaming Star of Africa, warranted at Potchefstroom on 22 May, 1865, the first lodge in the Republic, could not begin work that year as a result, lamented its first master, John Joseph, a local storekeeper.

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71. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years, History of South Africa pp. 240 - 241 (M.C.E. Van Schoor: The Orange Free State).
72. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years, p. 6.
73. Ibid., p. 13.
74. J. Luke: Early History of Lodge Unie, Bloemfontein (typewritten), p.3.
75. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years, History of South Africa p. 241 (M.C.E. Can Schoor: The Orange Free State).

In a letter dated 28 August, 1865 to the Deputy Grand Master National Brand in Cape Town, the lodge wrote: "Now that another commando is going out it had been thought advisable to postpone regular work for at least 3 months".⁷⁶ But the strain of war continued to be felt by Flaming Star which told Brand in January, 1868: "The majority of the brethren have left the country owing to the war with the natives".⁷⁷ It was in abeyance for two years.⁷⁸

Further favourable results for Dutch Freemasonry were produced after Brand's second missionary expedition in 1864. Travelling eastwards and northwards again, he was given cart and horses by lodges on his route. After meeting enthusiasts in a particular town, Brand would often grant them a provisional warrant immediately on his return to Cape Town. Willowmore, Cape, was the first fruit of this tour, and he granted Excelsior Lodge there a warrant on 18 January, 1865.⁷⁹

Following Brand's visit to Graaff-Reinet, local Dutch masons asked him in 1865 to reopen De Vereeniging which had closed a few years earlier.⁸⁰ Brand agreed and asked the new English Midland Lodge in that town to allow them use of their temple but Midland Lodge refused.⁸¹

Informing him of the refusal, P. Buyskes, master-elect of De Vereeniging complained: "If they (the English masons)

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- 76. CA A 2263 Vol.28, PGL NC, Diverse Papers, Register of Lodges: CA Unlisted Flaming Star, Potchefstroom, Minute Book, 1865 - 1871: Meeting 28 August, 1865, Letter to Brand 28 August, 1865
 - 77. CA Unlisted Flaming Star, Potchefstroom, Minute Book 28 February, 1865 - 12 June, 1871: Meeting 6 January, 1868; Letter to Brand 11 January, 1868.
 - 78. Ibid., Meeting 11 January, 1868; Letter to Brand 11 January, 1868.
 - 79. CA A 2223 Vol. 10, DGMN, Letters Received, January 1864 - December, 1865: Excelsior - Brand, 25 November, 1864; Brand - Excelsior, 18 January, 1865.
 - 80. Ibid., Vereeniging - Brand, 23 November, 1865.
 - 81. Ibid., Brand - Midland Lodge, 27 November, 1865; De Vereeniging - Brand, 29 November, 1865.

do not attend, I shall have no lodge".⁸² He voiced the problems of masters of lodges in small towns at this time of expansion. Later Buyskes told Brand Midland Lodge had acted in a "spirit of petty jealousy" , but De Vereeniging by 1867 had its own temple.⁸³

There were generally not sufficient English or Dutch masons to form separate lodges and practise ritual in their own languages. When they did unite, sectional loyalties often proved too strong and the lodges foundered.

Rivalry was not always confined to language affiliation. Philippolis in the Orange Free State petitioned for authority to open a lodge in January, 1866, but its sister Dutch Lodge, Unie in Bloemfontein, protested on the grounds there were not sufficient masons in the area.⁸⁴ As a result Patronheid Lodge, Philippolis, was not warranted until 1869.⁸⁵ Nearer to Brand's home, Northern Lodge, Colesberg, was constituted personally by him in January, 1866.⁸⁶ St. Jan, Malmesbury (petition 9 August, 1866) and Orange, Paarl (petition 7 August, 1866) were also constituted in the same year.⁸⁷ Brand was able to report to his Provincial Grand Lodge on 6 August, 1867 that from 1847 to 1862 he had had only 2 lodges under his jurisdiction. He had 12 now.

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- 82. CA A 2223 Vol. 10, DGMN, Letters Received, January 1864 - December, 1865: Buyskes - Brand, 29 November, 1865.
 - 83. CA A 2223 Vol. 12, DGMN, Letters Received, January 1867 - December, 1867: Buyskes - Brand, 28 December, 1867.
 - 84. CA A 2223 Vol. 11, DGMN, Letters Received, January 1866 - December, 1866: Philippolis - Brand, 6 January, 1866; Unie - Brand, 21 January, 1866; CA A 2263 Vol. 28, Provincial Grand Lodge NC, Diverse Papers: Register of Lodges.
 - 85. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting 1869: DGMN'S Address, 3 August, 1869, p.7.
 - 86. CA A 2223 Vol.11, DGMN, Letters Received, January 1866 - December, 1866: Colesberg - Brand, 6 January, 1866.
 - 87. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 1867: DGMN'S Address, 6 August, 1867, p.2; CA A 2263 Vol. 28, PGL NC, Diverse Papers: Register of Lodges.

"The stewardship over these twelve lodges, distributed over the colony and beyond, would be a labour too great and a weight of responsibility too heavy for my shoulders. The Grand East, therefore, responded to my suggestion, and erected this Provincial Grand Lodge, by resolution of the Grand East, in May, 1863; and with your aid and assistance thus afforded me I hope to advance the prosperity and well-being of the lodges thus placed under our care.⁸⁸

"My proceedings in establishing these lodges have on many occasions created bitter feelings in my mind, and frequently pained my heart. Every mason ought to hail the attempt and endeavour to extend our masonic jurisdiction; yet such, I have experienced, has not always been the case.⁸⁹

"I have in the publication, a few days ago, of my 'Masonic Epistle' exposed to you the difficulties I had to contend with and the stumbling blocks thrown in my way. The objections raised affected the rights and privileges of the Grand East and of the M.W. The Grand Master of the Netherlands, whom I in those matters represented; and it is in vindication of those rights that I have considered such publication necessary", said Brand.⁹⁰

MASONIC EPISTLE

His Masonic Epistle, circulated to all Dutch lodges, was a reply to objections from English and Scottish lodges to his missionary tours setting up new lodges. In fact, the rights and jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands in South Africa were questioned by English and Scottish masons who claimed that the Dutch Constitution had no right to establish new lodges in South Africa and that therefore such lodges were illegal and in violation of the Convention of 1770.

88. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting 1867: DGMN'S Address, 6 August, 1867, p.2.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

The facts behind this allegation are as follows. The Grand Lodge of Holland, created by the Grand Lodge of England, had in 1770 asked for acknowledgement of its status, "promising that, if the Grand Lodge of England would agree in future not to constitute any new lodge within its jurisdiction, the Grand Lodge of Holland would observe the same restrictions in respect of all parts of the world where lodges were already established under the patronage of England", wrote Brand.⁹¹ This declaration formed the basis of the so-called 1770 convention. It had been tacitly ignored in the Cape for nearly 100 years until in 1862 John Saunders, founder in 1860 and master of the first Scottish lodge in South Africa, Southern Cross, Cape Town, questioned Brand's authority and that of the Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa which he headed. When Brand was about to issue provisional warrants in 1862, following an application from George and Burghersdorp, Saunders disputed his right to do so, claiming that, under the 1770 Convention, the fact that the Colony was now under British rule prevented Dutch masonic expansion. Brand revealed in his Masonic Epistle that Saunders had approached the George group of masons, advising them to petition for a warrant under his own Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Scotland.⁹² As recorded, Saunders' attempt was unsuccessful and the George lodge came under Brand.

There were further objections to Brand issuing a provisional warrant in 1864 following a request from masons in Bloemfontein, he wrote in his Epistle, on the grounds that, following the Treaty of Cession in 1814 (when the British took over the Cape) it had been agreed between the masonic authorities in London and Holland that the Grand East of the Netherlands should not create any more lodges in the Cape Colony. He dismissed this objection as absurd, pointing out that the Dutch constitution had established itself in the Cape in 1772 and its lodges had

91. CA A 2223 Vol. 12, DGMN, Letters Received January 1867 - December 1867: Masonic Epistle, 12 July, 1867, p. 3.

92. Ibid., pp. 1 - 2.

been ruled since then by the local Deputy Grand Master National appointed by Holland. It was, in fact, the first masonic constitution in the Cape.⁹³

The dispute flared up again in July 1866. English-speaking members of the Dutch Lodge, De Goede Trouw, wishing to exert their right to visit other lodges, attended British Lodge in Cape Town. It is customary for masons to produce their Grand Lodge certificates of membership on visiting other lodges. The De Goede Trouw members were told that, having Dutch masonic certificates of membership, they would not be admitted to any English lodge. At the same time they were offered English certificates free of charge. After protest the master of the British Lodge "exculpated himself" to his counterpart in De Goede Trouw by explaining that his members had resolved not to admit any masons initiated in the Free State, or elsewhere and regarded them as "being illegal" in the Cape Colony for the masonic jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands did not extend itself beyond Cape Town.⁹⁴

Replying to British Lodge, De Goede Trouw pointed out this slight on members must be considered a "joke although very much out of place"; British Lodge's action was unmasonic.⁹⁵ Brand termed the British Lodge decision "preposterous" in a letter to Southey, head of the English lodges.⁹⁶ A further complication arose when John Saunders Rowe, the English Provincial Grand Secretary and a Past Master of British Lodge

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93. CA A 2223 Vol. 12, DGMN, Letters Received January 1867 - December 1867: Masonic Epistle, 12 July, 1867, pp. 2 - 3.
94. Ibid., Annexure No.2, De Goede Trouw - Brand, 1 August, 1866.
95. Ibid., Annexure No.3, De Goede Trouw - British Lodge, undated.
96. Ibid., Annexure No. 4, Brand - Southey, 10 August, 1866.

(1857-1858, 1860-1861, 1863) informed Brand that his Provincial Grand Lodge had already sent a memorial in June 1866 to the Grand Lodge of England, asking for advice about the legality of the Netherlandic Constitution forming new lodges in the Cape.⁹⁷

He pointed out to Brand that, as the Cape was a British Colony, claimed by conquest in 1814, the Dutch lodges and masons initiated since then should not be recognised. These objections, he persisted, were based on the 1770 Convention "Whereby each Grand Lodge undertook to abstain for the future from constituting new lodges within the jurisdiction of the other". He had asked London if this 1770 Convention were still in force.⁹⁸

Furious, Brand retorted that, as Dutch Deputy Grand Master National, he always had had authority to grant provisional warrants to new lodges, but finally agreed to await the decision of the Grand Lodge of England.⁹⁹ Rowe however did not, and, ignoring his masters, he informed anxious Dutch masons they were "illegal". "All masons initiated in lodges lately formed by Sir Christoffel Brand under the Constitution of the Netherlands and raised are not acknowledged as masons", he wrote to several lodges, Brand discovered.¹⁰⁰ Eventually Southey moved and in June 1867 informed Brand he had dismissed Rowe for dereliction of duty, repudiating his acts and writings and hoping that peace between the constitutions would be

97. CA A 2223 Vol.11, DGMN, Letters Received January 1866 - December, 1866: Rowe, Provincial Grand Secretary - Brand, 12 July, 1866, with copy of memo sent to Grand Lodge, England, 29 June, 1866.

98. Ibid.

99. Ibid., Brand - Southey, 12 July, 1866.

100. CA A 2223 Vol.12, DGMN, Letters Received January, 1867 - December, 1867: Brand - Southey, 3 April, 1867; Ibid., Masonic Epistle, 12 July, 1867, Annexures 9 - 13.

restored.¹⁰¹ At that moment the Grand Lodge of England had already decided that the 1770 Convention outlining territoriality of masonic constitutions in the world did not apply to South Africa where English and Dutch lodges had existed side by side since 1812 on the neutral ground of the Cape.¹⁰²

Vindicated by London's declaration, Brand, although 73 years of age and ailing, set out in January, 1869 on his last missionary journey. Reporting to the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge on August 14 that year, he said his visit had stimulated Dutch Freemasonry. He had established four new lodges at Somerset East, Philippolis, Adelaide and Kroonstad, and five "high" degree chapters - at Graaff-Reinet, Richmond, Pretoria, Potchefstroom and Adelaide. Membership had increased in most lodges. That at Graaff-Reinet had risen from 23 in 1867 - 1868 to 38 in 1869; at Harmony, Richmond, membership had increased from 21 to 43 and "under such a state of increased prosperity", members had built their own temple. Visiting Bloemfontein, he had found Lodge Unie "of all the lodges under my jurisdiction ... the most flourishing. In 1866 it counted 48 members and 15 initiations; in 1867, 67 members and 18 initiations; in 1868, 82 members and 17 initiations and in 1869, 102 members and 22 initiations. It has a splendid building erected for a temple and other rooms ... She may be considered the Mother Lodge in the Free State and Transvaal".¹⁰³

101. CA A 2223 Vol. 12, DGMN, Letters Received January 1867 - December, 1867: Masonic Epistle, 12 July, 1867; Annexure 17, W.R. Ellis, Provincial Grand Secretary - Brand, 12 June, 1867; PMC 1/1/1 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Circular to all lodges, 13 June, 1867.

102. CA A 2223 Vol.12, DGMN, Letters Received January 1867 - December 1867: Masonic Decision, 6 September, 1867, pp. 2 - 3, 18 - 20; FMH UGLE: Communications, 6 March, 1867, 5 June, 1867.

103. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 14 August, 1869: Brand's report, pp. 4 - 8.

Flaming Star at Potchefstroom, he found, had recovered from the effects of "the wars with the natives and commandos being called out".¹⁰⁴ Now back at work, from 1867, its membership had increased to 57 with 19 initiations and the lodge had laid the foundation stone for a temple. Its master had reported on that ceremony on June 24, 1869.

"The ceremony of laying the foundation stone went off very well indeed. By general consent it became a public holiday; even the Landdrost's office was closed and all the Potchefstroom world was there, and several strangers. The President was unable to attend. We gave the public a cold collation afterwards", he told Brand.¹⁰⁵

"I proceeded onwards to Pretoria to the Lodge Aurora", Brand reported. "In June 1868 having under my Provisional Warrant commenced their work with 12 members I found on my arrival that they were in full working and had increased to 21 members".¹⁰⁶ He had the honour of laying the foundation stone of the lodge's new temple. At Philippolis in the Free State, Lodge Patronheid, warranted on 22 February, 1869, had increased from the original 10 petitioners to 20. "Such progress in four months offers a hope of good success".¹⁰⁷

On his journey he was invited to Somerset East by eight masons who petitioned him for a warrant to set up Lodge Eintracht. It was granted on 11 December, and the lodge's membership had increased to 30 with eight initiations. It too was building its own temple, he reported.¹⁰⁸

104. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 14 August, 1869: Brand's Report, p.6.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid., p.7; CA A 2263 Vol.28, PGL NC, Diverse Papers: Register of lodges.

108. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 14 August, 1869: Brand's Report, p.7; CA A 2263 Vol.28, PGL NC, Diverse Papers: Register of lodges.

At Adelaide he had an unusual request from all the members of the English lodge there, St. Paul, for a warrant to set up a Dutch lodge, De Vriendschap.

"It would certainly appear strange that the Brethren of an English lodge at that place should have applied for a constitution under our Grand East; but to the honour of the Brethren be it said that the application was not intended as an opposition to the lodge then existing, but that their great object was to enable those who did not understand the English language enough to be introduced and instructed in the language familiar to them ... many farmers have thus been enabled to join our Craft", Brand told the Provincial Grand Lodge.¹⁰⁹

Granting the warrant, dated 10 March, 1869, he was told that most of St. Paul's members had joined De Vriendschap. "It is most pleasing to the heart ... to see the Brethren working under different laws, walking hand in hand and as children of the same house on the road to perfection, love, brotherhood".¹¹⁰

He granted a provisional warrant for Lodge Morgenster at "Cronstadt in the Orange Free State" on 15 May, 1867. It was supported by Lodge Unie. Regrettably, he told the Provincial Grand Lodge, lodges at Stellenbosch, Paarl and Colesberg were still at a standstill.¹¹¹

Brand's efforts to start a lodge in Fraserburg failed. A

109. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 14 August, 1869: Brand's Report, p.7.

110. Ibid.

111. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 14 August, 1869: Brand's Report, p.7; CA A 2263 Vol. 28, PGL, NC, Diverse Papers: Register of Lodges.

Dutch mason there, J.L. Doësel, wrote to Brand in October, 1869: "The Dutch brethren are happy to start a lodge here - the English don't want to work under the Dutch constitution and we, of course, return the compliment. It is a great pity the most wealthiest masons here are English ... the Dutch are too few to afford the costs of a Lodge".¹¹²

Nevertheless Brand had succeeded in making the Dutch constitution the more numerous in South Africa by 1869. New lodges had been warranted in the Cape, Orange Free State and Transvaal even though several others had foundered. He had won for his constitution English approval of its legality and reduced high-placed enemies in the English Constitution to insignificance.

FIRST CALL FOR INDEPENDENCE

But as his domain grew, his authority diminished. Rule from Cape Town became difficult while his age was against him. The expansion of lodges in the two republics and Natal strained the close ties existing within his constitution. There arose talk of founding Provincial Grand Lodges for closer administration in the Transvaal and Free State Republics, and, even more revolutionary, talk of forming a United Grand Lodge of South Africa to control the fortunes of all English, Dutch and Scottish lodges in the Cape, Orange Free State, S.A. Republic and Griqualand West with the Dutch element predominant.

Brand never publicly supported this unification movement, for his early battles to obtain full recognition of Dutch Freemasonry in the Cape had led him to maintain cautious, friendly relations with the English masonic establishment which in the Cape, through Southey, was linked to the political hierarchy. But some lodges under him were not so diplomatic,

112. CA A 2223 Vol.14, DGMN, Letters Received January, 1869 - December, 1869: Doësel - Brand, 21 October, 1869.



SIR RICHARD SOUTHEY

Fourth English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa, 1863 - 1866; First District Grand Master for South Africa (Western Division), 1866 - 1879.

writing to him to urge unification. For instance, Lodge Harmony at Richmond in the first recorded evidence of a move to form a United Grand Lodge for South Africa, circularised this resolution dated 10 September, 1870: "That considering the great spread of masonry in the Colony and the position taken up by the several lodges, this lodge would respectfully submit to the Provincial Grand Lodge whether the time has not arrived that there should be established in this colony a separate and distinct Grand East which might embrace the different lodges working at present under different Grand Easts."¹¹³

"This lodge would therefore urge that such a step would lend materially to establish a more firm bond between the Craft, being then like children of one parent, calling for their united support and granting them its fostering call."¹¹⁴

"Considering the large amounts annually sent to Europe by the different lodges working under different Grand Easts, this lodge concludes that such sums might be more beneficially spent in this Colony in providing education and assistance to the families of so many Brethren in this Colony who are now debarred from seeking those advantages in the establishments in Europe which have been brought into existence by the assistance of fees levied in the Colony, not doubting that the establishment of a Grand East in the Colony will cause the Brethren to contribute more largely towards those noble purposes which our Holy Order has in view - whereas now they have not had the privilege of seeing the fruits of their charity in that the funds are devoted to establishments in foreign countries".¹¹⁵

113. CA A 2223 Vol.26, DGMN, Letters Received, Lodges, Lodge Harmony, Richmond, July 1868 - September 1883: Resolution Circular, 10 September, 1870.

114. Ibid.

115. Ibid.

Brand decided to test his lodges not only on their views about a United Grand Lodge, but, more important at this time, on whether a provincial Grand Lodge for the north should be created. A circular was sent out to his 12 lodges on 19 December, 1870.¹¹⁶

His Cape lodges were obviously satisfied with the rule from Cape Town and his personal authority for they failed to reply. His carefully kept correspondence includes only two replies - from Aurora in Pretoria and Flaming Star in Potchefstroom. The former wrote two letters, insisting it wanted to stay under the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town. "We are fearfully against anything to do with the Free State. If an Orange Free State Provincial Grand Lodge is established then the Transvaal will want one. Both Flaming Star (Potchefstroom) and Aurora will cease to exist and English lodges will be established in their place".¹¹⁷

The next day, it conveyed this sentiment: "Under the present circumstances it is not desirable to form a Provincial Grand Lodge in these parts as it prefers to remain under the guidance of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Cape Town and under no circumstances whatsoever does it wish to be under the jurisdiction of a Provincial Grand Lodge at Bloemfontein".¹¹⁸

In contrast, Flaming Star wrote that a "Provincial Grand Lodge should be established in these parts and should be named the Provincial Grand Lodge of Orange Free State and Transvaal territories".¹¹⁹

The unification issue so far as the Dutch lodges were concerned

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116. CA A 2223 Vol.17, DGMN, Letters Received January 1871 - December, 1871: Brand's Circular, February, 1871.
117. Ibid., Aurora - Brand, 7 January, 1871.
118. Ibid., Aurora - Brand, 8 January, 1871.
119. Ibid., Flaming Star - Brand, 22 February, 1871.

was overshadowed in the next few years with membership depleted and even some Dutch lodges closing through the exodus of members to the newly-opened diamond and goldfields to the north. In retrospect, Christian Silberbauer, Deputy Grand Master for the Netherlandic High Degrees in 1930, recorded of the time: "Enterprising brethren left their towns and districts to seek their fortunes at the 'Fields' and lodges and chapters deprived of their presence and influence, became moribund and eventually defunct".¹²⁰

ENGLISH SECESSION

While Dutch Freemasonry opened up to the north, English Freemasonry consolidated itself in the Eastern Province, Natal and Griqualand West in the 1860s and 1870s. Southey was appointed the English Provincial Grand Master in 1863.¹²¹ He found little respite from his official duties to pursue his masonic work with the same energy as Brand and perhaps this factor was to encourage the English masonic secessionist movement in the East, which closely followed the political thinking of the time.

Albany Lodge, founded in 1828 in Grahamstown, was the key to this movement. Davenport writes on the political scene: "Separatism was the banner under which the residents of distant parts of the Cape Colony challenged the political supremacy of Cape Town and the West. At one extreme it means the complete constitutional separation of East and West as

120. C.C. Silberbauer: Inaugural Address, Consecration Settlers Rose Croix Chapter, Grahamstown, 22 November, 1930, p.15.

121. CA ACC 611, Vol. 2, Southey Papers, Letters Received, May, 1852 - November, 1872: UGLE - Southey, 5 March, 1863; FMH UGLE, Letters South Africa, 1860-1880: Southey - United Grand Lodge, 19 August, 1863.

separate colonies, an ambition which was realised in the case of Natal in 1856, and sometimes found supporters in the Eastern Cape. Alternatively it might find expression in a desire to move the centre of Government of a united Colony nearer to the frontier and thus eliminate Cape Town's control over the east. A third way was federalism, the subdivision of the Cape Colony into distinct regional administrations".¹²²

Grahamstown was the centre of the early separatist movement and this was reflected mirrorlike in the refusal since 1833 of Albany Lodge to accept rule from Cape Town, insisting on communication directly with the Grand Lodge of England. It constantly refused to pay its dues to Cape Town but in 1848 reluctantly made submission.¹²³

However it found new allies for its campaign for secession when, between 1851 and 1861, seven new lodges were warranted for the Eastern Province, one from Bloemfontein and one from Port Natal.

Lodge Goodwill was warranted at Port Elizabeth on 30 July, 1857, Zetland at Fort Beaufort on 30 November, 1852, St. John's at Grahamstown on 7 August, 1860, British Kaffrarian at King William's Town on 12 January, 1861, Good Hope at Port Elizabeth on 4 April, 1861, Star in the East at Queenstown on 5 July, 1862 and St. Paul's at Adelaide on 23 October, 1863. Further west, Union Lodge was warranted at Knysna on

122. M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa I, pp. 324 - 327
(T.R.H. Davenport: Consolidation of a New Society: The Cape Colony).

123. E.G. Dru Drury: Records of Albany Lodge, 1828 - 1928, pp. 29 - 30.

2 October, 1861 At Bloemfontein the Sovereignty Lodge was warranted on 2 December, 1851, but it never paid dues or fees to London and was erased in 1862. Port Natal, Durban was warranted on 3 March, 1858.¹²⁴

In a mediatory move towards the rebel lodge, Southey visited Albany when he was in Grahamstown on official duties attending the Cape Parliament in 1864. Relations were cordial but peace was not yet.¹²⁵

Goodwill Lodge in Port Elizabeth the next year took the initiative, circularising Eastern lodges for their views on the formation of an English district or provincial Grand Lodge for the Eastern Province.¹²⁶

It wrote: "The great majority of the colonial lodges under the English Constitution being situated in the Eastern Province and at distances varying from 200 to 600 miles from Cape Town renders it physically impossible for the respected Masters and Wardens to attend the duties in the Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town which, in their unavoidable absence, must consist almost entirely of Brethren unknown to and unacquainted with the wishes and interests of the Eastern lodges and must in fact be attended only by those who belong to 3 or 4 lodges in Cape Town and neighbourhood".¹²⁷

It pointed out that the time elapsing between sending and receiving correspondence was at least twice as long as it used to be communicating direct with Grand Lodge. "We are now

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124. FMH UGLE, Record of Warrants and Petitions, 1812 - 1900; PMC 1/1/1 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Minute, 15 April, 1864; T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 61.
125. E.G. Dru Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 31.
126. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: Chronicle of Lodge of Goodwill, 1857 - 1910, p. 34.
127. W.C. Kemsley: History of The Good Hope Lodge, 1860 - 1904, p. 10.

obliged to pay Provincial Grand Lodge fees and have thus our own expenses increased while, instead of receiving any proportionate benefit, we are in a far worse position than before".¹²⁸ Goodwill suggested Eastern lodges inform London of these difficulties and recommend: "The jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Lodge be confined to the limits of the Western Province of the Cape Colony while the Eastern Province lodges continue in direct communication with Grand Lodge until a District Grand Lodge be established in the Eastern Province".¹²⁹

This circular sparked off open revolt. St. Paul's, Adelaide, addressed lodges Goodwill and Good Hope of Port Elizabeth in May, 1868, supporting the circular which was unanimously adopted by Star in the East in Queenstown, St. John's Lodge in Grahamstown, Zetland in Fort Beaufort, and strongly supported by lodges Good Hope and Goodwill.¹³⁰ Zetland circularised a petition in November, 1868 calling for a separate Provincial Grand Lodge and in the meantime asked that Eastern lodges be placed directly under London's control.¹³¹ Goodwill suggested in January, 1869 that lodge delegates should meet in Grahamstown to discuss the matter and that town should be the site of the proposed Provincial Grand Lodge, However, Port Elizabeth was put forward as an alternative site and some wrangling began over this issue.¹³²

But the separatists were quiet for some time, watching the trials of Albany Lodge which had been singled out by Southey

128. W.C. Kemsley: History of The Good Hope Lodge, 1860-1904, p. 10.

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid., p. 10; T.N. Cranstoun-Day: Goodwill Lodge, p.34.

131. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: Goodwill Lodge, p. 34.

132. W.C. Kemsley: Good Hope Lodge, pp. 10 - 11.

as the ringleader of the revolt. His Provincial Grand Lodge, meeting on 17 April, 1868, resolved to summon representatives of lodges which had not made their returns nor paid their fees to appear at a meeting in Cape Town on 15 July that year "and show cause why they should not be suspended for contumacy".¹³³ Albany's master, R.E. Rushby, wrote to Grand Lodge of England pointing out that Southey's summons was ingenuous to say the least. To attend the meeting "would mean a loss of 3 weeks and a cost of £50 at least to cover the 200 miles by road to Port Elizabeth and back and the 1000 miles of sea to Cape Town and back".¹³⁴ He told London of the languishing of Freemasonry in the East under Southey's rule, the desire for an Eastern Provincial Grand Lodge or, alternatively, for direct rule by Grand Lodge.¹³⁵

As Southey had warned, Albany was suspended for contumacy in January, 1869. "In consequence of the Albany Lodge having failed to answer a peremptory summons to appear at a Provincial Grand Lodge meeting to be held on 17 October last", his Board of General Purposes recommended the lodge be suspended and "no working in the Albany Lodge be recognised from this date until said lodge make due submission".¹³⁶

The Provincial Grand Lodge's action proved futile, for Rushby persuaded members to sever their ties with the English Constitution and apply for a warrant from the Grand Lodge of

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- 133. PMC 1/1/1 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Meeting, 17 April, 1868.
 - 134. E.G. Dru Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 32
 - 135. Ibid.
 - 136. PMC 1/1/1 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Board of General Purposes Meeting, 21 January, 1869; Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting, 23 January, 1869.

Scotland. On this being granted in the same year, Southey suspended all communication with Scottish masons, creating a ridiculous situation, as many masons, particularly in Cape Town, belonged to both constitutions and were now barred from Scottish lodges.¹³⁷

Southey's blunders were multiplied when it was found that his District Grand Secretary, W. Rufus Ellis, had suppressed letters, returns and dues from lodges under his control including Albany Lodge which was, in fact, blameless.¹³⁸ Resuscitated in 1871, Albany Lodge did not hold a grudge, for in December, 1872, it and its sister lodge in Grahamstown, St. John's, offered Southey, on his way to take up his post as Administrator of Griqualand West, the position of District Grand Master of the proposed new Eastern Province masonic district.¹³⁹ He refused because of the pressure of his official duties and the necessity for him to live in Kimberley. His neglect of masonic affairs as Provincial Grand Master for South Africa had by then brought confusion in his district but he did not resign until 1879, when he installed C.A. Fairbridge as his successor.¹⁴⁰

The secessionist movement grew in strength. The petition calling for a separate Provincial Grand Lodge had been supported by all Eastern lodges except the Midland Lodge at Graaff-Reinet. It asked that a separate Provincial Grand Lodge be set up in Port Elizabeth with Frederick Durant Deare as the first Provincial Grand Master. The new district would include the Eastern Province, Orange Free State and

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137. CA A 2223 Vol. 15, DGMN, Letters Received, January, 1870 - December 1870: DGL WD EC, Circular, 19 August, 1870; T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.101.
138. PMC 1/1/1, DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Report, 11 May, 1869.
139. E.G. Dru Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 34.
140. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 108; PMC 1/1/3, DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 3 May, 1879 - 10 June, 1891: Meeting, 19 June, 1879.

as I have indicated without losing time
by making many further enquiries. Delay may
possibly stimulate the mischievous demand for
Emancipation from all allegiance and an
Independent G^d. Lodge.

I sd hope from the statements in these papers
that the English element scattered through the Dutch
States is strong enough, if incorporated in ~~the~~ one
district G^d. Lodge, to overpower & absorb all foreign
influences and thus to bring the whole Dutch
Masonry ultimately under the G^d. Lodge of Eng^d.
I have of course no information beyond what
these papers give me.

9 Dec. 1875

Carnarvon

Lord Carnarvon, Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England wrote his Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, a memorandum dated 9 December, 1875 on the proposed division of English constitution lodges in South Africa, a page of which is reproduced above. A separate district grand lodge for Griqualand West, Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal was essential, he wrote. He hoped, as shown above, "that the English element if incorporated in one district grand lodge, will overpower and absorb all foreign influences and thus bring the whole Dutch Masonry ultimately under the Grand Lodge of England".

the Diamond Fields. The petition was sent to Cape Town but was lost by the Provincial Grand Lodge so, in June, 1871, a notarial copy was sent direct to London.¹⁴¹

Further delays occurred when, in November, 1873, Grand Lodge informed the eastern petitioners that the warrant establishing a new Eastern Province District Grand Lodge could not be signed as the Grand Master, Earl of Zetland, had resigned in 1870 and his successor, the Prince of Wales, was in India.¹⁴² It was suggested the matter be held over, but the exasperated Eastern lodges expressed their dissatisfaction with the rule of the West by petitioning London successfully to be released from the jurisdiction of Cape Town and placed directly under London.¹⁴³

Southey's territory of "South Africa and Adjacent Colonies" was coming apart. In 1867 his Provincial Grand Lodge issued a claim of jurisdiction over the two Natal lodges existing then - Port Natal at Durban, warranted on 3 March, 1858, and Prince Alfred at Maritzburg (28 March, 1863). Fees and returns of membership were demanded.¹⁴⁴ The lodges told Cape Town petitions had been sent to London resisting the claim on the grounds "of their great distance therefrom and also from their not being actually an adjacent colony to South Africa".¹⁴⁵

Grand Lodge was quick to reply. At its meeting on 10 January, 1868, Provincial Grand Lodge recorded a letter from

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- 141. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: Lodge Goodwill, p. 36.
 - 142. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 108.
 - 143. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: Lodge Goodwill, p. 37.
 - 144. NEA, C.W.P. Douglas-de-Fenzi: Record of English Freemasonry in District of Natal, p.5.
 - 145. PMC 1/1/1 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Board of General Purposes, 17 October, 1867.

London dated 10 October, 1867 informing Port Natal Lodge, one of the petitioners: "The Colony in which your lodge is situated does not form any portion of the masonic district of South Africa over which Bro. the Honourable R. Southey has jurisdiction".¹⁴⁶ Furthermore the Natal lodges need not pay dues or fees to Cape Town, nor were they "amenable to the by-laws of that body". They were to come under the direct rule of London.¹⁴⁷

The English separatist movement spread outward, again expressing dissatisfaction with rule from Cape Town. Complaints from Rising Star, Bloemfontein, were typical. Letters remained unanswered. Diplomas were not forwarded and the work of Provincial Grand Lodge generally was carried on in a very slipshod manner, writes Wienand.¹⁴⁸ But it was cautious about joining the Easterners' call for a separate District Grand Lodge. "We were badly treated by Cape Town but there was no certainty of better treatment by Port Elizabeth".¹⁴⁹ Finally Rising Star signed the petition for a new District Grand Lodge on 6 April, 1870.¹⁵⁰

Three new lodges on the Diamond Fields - Cosmopolitan (Kimberley, 1872), Octahedron (Barkly West, 1872), and Richard Giddy (Kimberley, July, 1875) petitioned Grand Lodge on 22 November, 1875 "for local self-government and release from the District Grand Lodge of South Africa" to form a northern District Grand Lodge to include Griqualand,

146. PMC 1/1/1 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 April, 1864 - 16 March, 1871: Board of General Purposes, 17 October, 1867

147. Ibid.

148. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years, p. 15.

149. Ibid.

150. Ibid.

Orange Free State, Transvaal and Natal, as well as Hopetown and Colesberg in the Cape Colony. It suggested that R.W.H. Giddy, Treasurer-General of Griqualand West, be made District Grand Master of the suggested Northern Provinces of South Africa.¹⁵¹

Their territorial demands clashed with those made by the eastern lodges, but Grand Lodge recommended that Griqualand and Port Elizabeth have separate districts "as the latter area had long agitated for a separate district".¹⁵² It suggested the Northern District should include Griqualand West, Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal, and pointed out that Cape Town had four English lodges, Natal five, Griqualand four and the Eastern Province 16.¹⁵³

The underlying reason for the Grand Lodge agreeing to this separation was given in a memo from Lord Carnarvon, the Pro-Grand Master, to the Grand Master, Prince of Wales, dated 9 December, 1875, in which he wrote:

"There is I think reasonable ground for requesting one or more district Grand Lodges. The distances and difficulties of communication are so great that it is not fair to insist upon Cape Town being the sole centre of masonic benefits.

"Ultimately I do not doubt that there should be several district Grand Lodges, and, if there were a very strong feeling in favour of this, I would not hesitate to comply. But I understand that one will be now ample and fully sufficient for the present and this is far preferable.

"I would therefore encourage the formation of one district

151. FMH UGLE DGL ED, Letter File: Petition to Grand Lodge 22 November, 1875; Anon: Richard Giddy Lodge History p.5; KEA, W.I. Macdonald: Cosmopolitan Lodge (typed) p.6.

152. FMH UGLE DGL ED, Letter File: Grand Secretary - Giddy, 21 December, 1875.

153. Ibid.

Grand Lodge for Griqualand, the two Dutch States and Natal, holding out the enticement or even the promise to them that hereafter, when masonry had made further progress and the circumstances of the call pointed to it, there would be no disinclination to divide this enormous territory into more manageable jurisdictions.

"I see many advantages in the proposed masonic union of all the lodges in the two colonies and the two Dutch states if it can be accomplished as a present measure to be thereafter followed by a more perfect system.

"As to the place where such a district Grand Lodge should be held, I consider that this should be left to them to settle.

"I would on the whole be disposed to act as I have indicated without losing time by making many further enquiries. Delay may possibly stimulate the mischievous demand for emancipation from all allegiance and an independent Grand Lodge.

"I should hope that the English element scattered through the Dutch States is strong enough, if incorporated in one district Grand Lodge, to overpower and absorb all foreign influences and thus to bring the whole Dutch masonry ultimately under the Grand Lodge of England".¹⁵⁴

This statement of masonic policy complements Carnarvon's political ambition as Colonial Secretary (1874-1878) to secure a confederation of South African states. It also indicates some identification of high masonic direction with British Colonial office thinking in this period.

154. FMH UGLE, Grand Lodge Letters: Pro-Grand Master Lord Carnarvon - Grand Master, Prince of Wales, Memo, 9 December, 1875.

Carnarvon, Pro-Grand Master (1874-1890) of the English Grand Lodge and other masonic "devotees", believed that Freemasonry was "not only a handmaid to the church, to education and social order but also ... a real link of empire".¹⁵⁵ Hyam writes that Carnarvon best attested to this belief of the time of many British Government Administrators, soldiers and churchmen who were masons. In March, 1857 Carnarvon had declared: "Following closely in the wake of colonisation ... there masonry has soon equal dominion ... it has consolidated ... the British Empire".¹⁵⁶

Finally, in April, 1876, ten years after the separatist move began, Lord Carnarvon announced the division of most of the English lodges in South Africa into three districts - the Western, Eastern and Griqualand West. Lodges were given the option of remaining under direct control of the Grand Lodge of England if desired. The Western Division would include Cape Town and that part of the country to longitude 22, the Eastern Division between longitude 22 and 28 and latitude 31, while the Griqualand West Division would include Griqualand and adjacent lodges.¹⁵⁷

The Grand Secretary, John Hervey, announcing the separation, wrote to Southey: "The Pro-Grand Master (Carnarvon) is quite aware that in this arrangement the existing Grand Lodge will be called upon to make considerable sacrifices ... It is right to add that the extension of the District has been steadily progressing East and that by far the greater number of lodges are now congregated on the South coast, in the direction of Port Elizabeth".¹⁵⁸

Griqualand West district was first formed at a meeting in

155. R. Hyam: Britain's Imperial Century, 1815 - 1914, p. 154.

156. Ibid., pp. 154-155.

157. PMC 1/1/2 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 9 June, 1871 - 10 April, 1879: Grand Secretary - Southey, 12 April, 1876

158. Ibid.

Kimberley on 30 March, 1876 even before the official announcement, with Giddy as its first District Grand Master.¹⁵⁹

But the Easterners were slower and haggled over the appointment of their new district grand master. Eventually, in November, 1876 Albany Lodge called a conference in Grahamstown to decide the matter.¹⁶⁰ Delegates from 13 lodges attended and the names of H.W. Pearson of Port Elizabeth, Dr. C.J. Egan, Mayor of King William's Town and T.P.O. Mathew of Adelaide were submitted to the ballot. Dr. Egan was finally chosen. It was also decided to recommend that "To provide for the future masonic wants of the Transkeian territory and also to provide a fairer distribution of territory for the Western Division" that the Western Division area be extended to longitude 23 and the Eastern Division to longitude 29.¹⁶¹

The Eastern Division held its first communication or meeting on 16 May, 1878 at King William's Town when Egan was installed as District Grand Master.¹⁶² By 1881 it returned 848 members from 16 lodges.¹⁶³

Griqualand West Division with three lodges - Cosmopolitan, Kimberley (1872), Octahedron, Barkley West (1872) and Richard Giddy (1875) - was placed under Giddy and established from 30 March, 1876.¹⁶⁴ On the resignation of Giddy, who

159. Anon: Richard Giddy Lodge History, pp. 4 - 5.

160. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: Lodge Goodwill, p. 37.

161. DGL ED EC, Minutes of meetings at Grahamstown on 15, 16, 17 November, 1876: pp. 13 - 19.

162. DGL ED EC, Minute Book, 15 November, 1876 - 11 September, 1895: 1st Communication, 16 May, 1878.

163. FMH UGLE, Eastern Division, South Africa: Returns, 1880 - 1881.

164. KEA DGL CD EC, Reports: Centenary Communication 22 May, 1976, Address by R.C. Dowie, p.21.

left Kimberley to live in Europe, the District Grand Lodge functioned weakly until it was closed by London from 13 December, 1882. No successor was appointed and lodges communicated direct to London.¹⁶⁵ In the next 11 years four new lodges were constituted in the area - Stella at Vryburg in 1887, Henry B. Loch Lodge at Kimberley, 1888, Franklin at Windsorton in 1893 and Austral at Mafeking in 1894. As a result of this growth, the Central Division to include Griqualand West and Bechuanaland was set up on 22 October, 1895.¹⁶⁶ The new District Grand Master, R.M. Roberts, controlled eight lodges which returned 491 members the following year.¹⁶⁷

Following Carnarvon's recommendation for division of South Africa into districts, the Natal lodges were asked in 1877 by Griqualand West District to come within its jurisdiction but they preferred to stay under the direct control of London. Later that year Pietermaritzburg masons asked Grand Lodge to set up a masonic District in Natal, but the coastal lodges objected, claiming all lodges should be consulted first.¹⁶⁸ Natalia Lodge, Pietermaritzburg, made a further unsuccessful attempt in 1880 to set up a "District Grand Lodge for South East Africa".¹⁶⁹

In 1881 Grand Lodge tried to bring settlement to this question when it wrote to all lodges in Griqualand West, Eastern Province, Natal, Free State and Transvaal,

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- 165. W.I. Macdonald: Cosmopolitan Lodge, pp. 6 - 7.
 - 166. KEA DGL CD EC, Reports Centenary Communication, 22 May, 1976, Address by R.C. Dowie, p. 21.
 - 167. KEA DGL CD EC, Minute Book, 22 January, 1896 - 24 September, 1913 (book restarted from defunct Griqualand West Division reports): Meeting, 22 January, 1896.
 - 168. NEA, C.W.P. Douglas-de-Fenzi: Records English Freemasonry in Natal 1882 - 1894, pp. 5 - 6.
 - 169. FMH UGLE, File Natal, Eastern Division, Central Division, Loose papers: Natalia Lodge resolution - Grand Lodge, 3 September, 1880.

suggesting that a "Northern Districts Division be set up to include the four lodges in Griqualand West, one in Griqualand East, seven in Natal, three in the Free State and the one in the Transvaal" (at Pretoria). Their views were sought on this suggestion.¹⁷⁰

Objections were soon received. Port Natal Lodge opposed the suggested extended District Grand Lodge. The distances between Durban and Griqualand West, Pretoria and Kokstad were too long. "It would take Durban masons 10 days to 6 weeks to reach Pretoria for meetings", it wrote.¹⁷¹ Finally, the Grand Secretary informed lodges that Grand Lodge's suggestion had not met with approval. However, Grand Lodge did approve a District Grand Lodge for Natal which would include eight lodges in Natal with one at Kokstad in Griqualand East. He again asked for Natal's views.¹⁷² Local lodges submitted the name of Mr. Justice Robert Isaac Finnemore of Natalia Lodge as the first District Grand Master. Early in 1883 they were notified that the Grand Master, His Royal Highness Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, had appointed Finnemore. From then the District of Natal was established, with nine lodges - Port Natal at Durban (1858), Prince Alfred at Pietermaritzburg (1863), Inanda at Verulam (1867), Natalia at Pietermaritzburg (1877), Carnarvon at Richmond (1877), Skelmersdale at Pietermaritzburg (1877), Umvoti at Greytown (1880), Addington at Durban (1881) and Umlazi at Pinetown (1882).

170. FMH UGLE, Division of Districts in South Africa: Grand Secretary's circular, 18 January, 1881.

171. Ibid., Port Natal - Grand Lodge, 21 March, 1881.

172. Ibid., Grand Secretary's circular, 18 January, 1882; *ibid.*, Proceedings Natal 1882 - 1904.

Membership recorded at the inaugural meeting of the new District Grand Lodge on 28 March, 1883 totalled 402.¹⁷³

English Freemasonry made little headway across the Vaal River in those years. Transvaal Lodge at Pretoria was warranted on 14 March, 1878, after which no English Lodge appeared until 1889 when lodges were warranted in that year at Johannesburg, Zeerust and Klerksdorp.¹⁷⁴ A Transvaal district for English Lodges was only set up in 1895.¹⁷⁵ By 1898 the District Grand Master, G. Richards, reported to London his new district controlled 24 lodges with 1838 members.¹⁷⁶

By the 1870s the strength of English Freemasonry lay to the east and Natal. Its expansion had been spurred by the economic growth in those areas. In the Midlands and the North, Netherlandic Freemasonry was dominant. However the picture was to change with the impact of the discovery of diamonds and gold in the interior.

The centrifugal effect of these developments from Cape Town, the original centre of Freemasonry in South Africa, made themselves felt strongly on the masonic movement as will be shown, producing further divisions and encouraging stronger moves towards a masonic grand lodge for South Africa.

173. C.W.P. Douglas-de-Fenzi: Records English Freemasonry in Natal 1882 - 1894, pp. 6 - 7.

174. FMH UGLE, Record Warrants and Petitions in South Africa.

175. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File, 1860 - 1906: DGL TVL - Grand Secretary, report inauguration, 30 April, 1895.

176. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria file 1860 - 1906: Richards - Grand Secretary, 1 October, 1898.

CHAPTER II

A RUSH NORTHWARDS

The discovery of diamonds in 1867 in the district of Hopetown attracted thousands of fortune-hunters into Griqualand West. Three years later diamonds were found in the area between the Orange River and Vaal River where the city of Kimberley was to rise as a result of the diamond rush.¹ Within a few years some 45,000 sought fortunes at the diggings, which became a concentration of population second only to Cape Town.² Within five years more than £1 600 000 worth of diamonds were being exported annually.³ The importance of the diamond finds must be seen in relation to the whole economic structure of the country. It provided a new source of wealth which offered lucrative employment, apart from agriculture, to all. It attracted capital and population. The new diggings provided food markets for the farmer. As important, it spurred on railway construction northwards. It was perhaps the start of the Industrial Revolution in South Africa.⁴

These benefits eventually brought an end to the recession that had gripped the Cape from the early 1860s, while the Free State Republic also enjoyed newfound prosperity, mainly through increased trade in food and transport to the diamond fields.⁵

Political sovereignty over the area soon came into dispute.

1. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years. A History of S.A., p.243. (M.C.E. Van Schoor: The Orange Free State).
2. M Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, p.11.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.12.
5. M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, P.12; C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years. A History of S.A., p. 245. (M.C. Van Schoor: The Orange Free State).

The Free State Republic under President J.H. Brand had previously claimed the diamond-rich territory between the Orange River and Vaal River. He reproclaimed it in 1870 and Free State officials were appointed to keep law and order. Yet he was opposed by Richard Southey, then Cape Colonial Secretary, "an ardent imperialist and no lover of republican independence", who believed the fields should be under British control.⁶ Eventually the Griqua territory was annexed by Britain in October 1871 and was incorporated into the Cape Colony in 1880.⁷

The takeover of the territory proved a blessing for English Freemasonry. The United Grand Lodge of England had always refused to grant warrants for new English lodges in countries not under British political control, adhering to a series of conventions, for example, the 1770 Convention between Holland and England quoted earlier, which guaranteed masonic territoriality within a country's own borders.⁸

However, Griqualand West was now under the British flag. Prior to this English masons on the Diamond Fields had been unable to create new lodges. Through the driving force of R.W.H. Giddy, new Resident Commissioner at New Rush, later Kimberley, the first English Lodge, Cosmopolitan, was formed and warranted by England on June 28, 1872. Signatories to the petition to the United Grand Lodge included masons from Australia, England, the United States, South Australia, Scotland and Shanghai, as well as men from South African lodges including Giddy who was a Past Master from Zetland Lodge, Fort Beaufort.

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6. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years. A History of South Africa, p. 244. (M.C. Van Schoor: Orange Free State); C.W. De Kiewiet: A History of South Africa, Social and Economic, p. 102.
 7. M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, p. 12.
 8. P.H. Butterfield: Centenary, First 100 Years of English Freemasonry in the Transvaal, 1878 - 1978, p. 53.

Charter members included J.F. Bissett, J.A. Benn, W. Knight, E.R. Ellis, Wilms, Eagle, R.G. Blanch, J. Ashton, E.A. Pearson, B.J. Bower, C. Logan, A.E. Jeffrey and J.D. Ingram. The first meeting place was given as Vooruitzigt, Pniel District.⁹ However, its first assembly took place in the court room at Colesberg Kopje on 26 April, 1872 with Giddy in the chair.¹⁰

The new lodge soon began the work of initiating new candidates. On 1 July, 1872 it initiated 10 candidates in one evening. Their stated occupations reveal the type of individual coming to the fields. They included J. Alford a digger, R.E. Wallace a diamond dealer, G.R. Irvine a hotelkeeper, C. Bruce a digger, G. Michaelis a storekeeper, H.H. Andrews, A. Napier, A.P. Watson, J. Rolfe and S. Brittain, all of whom termed themselves as diggers. On the same day eight masons joined the lodge, coming from Fort Beaufort, Bloemfontein and Queenstown. The lodge adjourned late at 7.30 p.m., and the next day accepted applications from 12 more candidates and initiated them. Among these were tailors and auctioneers. A further 17 candidates, with diggers and diamond dealers in the majority, were initiated on 5 August, 1872, making the phenomenal total of 39 candidates in just over a month.¹¹

Members did not forget their charitable duties. Minutes of 1 July, 1872 record the lodge granted £10 to purchase a tent for "Brother Lowe, ill from an incurable disease, living in a small tent with a wife and large family who is now in a state of utter destitution".¹²

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9. FMH UGLE, Petitions and Warrants South Africa: Petition to Freemasons' Hall, 1872; KEA W.I. Macdonald: Cosmopolitan Lodge (typed), p.1.
 10. W.I. Macdonald: Cosmopolitan Lodge (typed), p. 1.
 11. Cosmopolitan Lodge, Minute Book, 26 April, 1872 - 14 June, 1877: Meetings 1 and 2 July, 1872, 5 August, 1872.
 12. Ibid., Meeting 1 July, 1872.

Another digger lodge, the Octahedron, was formed at the same time under the English Constitution at Klipdrift, later Barkly West, following a petition to London.¹³ Its first meeting was at the Court House, Klipdrift on 1 August, 1871, and it was eventually warranted by London on 18 September, 1872 with I.S. Gordon as the first master.¹⁴

As more came to seek diamonds, a third English lodge - second in Kimberley - called the Richard Giddy Lodge, came into being. A group of masons met at the Treasury, Kimberley, on 22 July, 1875 to submit a petition to London for a new lodge. Prime mover was again Giddy, now a Past Master of Cosmopolitan Lodge.¹⁵ Although not warranted by London until May, 1876, it nevertheless held its first installation meeting on 3 July, 1875, when R.M. Roberts was installed Master by Giddy. Southey, still nominal District Grand Master 'for South Africa and Adjacent Colonies' and now in Kimberley as Administrator of the territory, attended the ceremony.¹⁶

As appeared to be the Kimberley pattern, the lodge initiated 16 candidates within the next 14 days. Average for initiates was 25, with the older men coming from the professional classes - clerics, doctors, dentists and solicitors.¹⁷

This was an indication that the newly-named town of Kimberley was attracting a more settled population. This sudden growth of Freemasonry in the Diamond Fields inspired Richard Giddy Lodge to make the first call for a local District Grand Lodge.

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13. FMH UGLE, *Petitions and Warrants, South Africa: Petition to London, 1871.*
 14. Octahedron Lodge, *Minute Book, 12 May 1871 - 1 December 1874: Meeting 18 September, 1872.*
 15. Anon: Richard Giddy Lodge History, pp. 1 - 2.
 16. Richard Giddy Lodge, *Minute Book, 22 July 1875 - 1 July, 1886: Meeting 3 July, 1875.*
 17. Anon: Richard Giddy Lodge History, pp. 1 - 2.

A meeting on 7 October, 1875 at Kimberley resolved to ask England to release it from its allegiance to the District Grand Lodge of South Africa in Cape Town and suggested a Northern Province District Grand Lodge be set up to include Griqualand West, the Free State and Transvaal Republics, Natal, and also including Hopetown and Colesberg in the Cape, with Giddy as the first District Grand Master.¹⁸ Support came from Cosmopolitan and Octahedron lodges as earlier recorded.

The Netherlandic Constitution set up its first lodge in the Diamond Fields in 1873, but there was at least one attempt before then. On the request of digger masons at Pniel in 1871, Brand sent a provisional warrant to establish the Diamond Lodge at that centre. But difficulties arose. James Halkett wrote to Brand: "I am afraid there will be but little hope of forming a lodge here ... If not at Pniel perhaps at Du Toits Pan, De Beers or some other thickly populated camp".¹⁹ He said the first preliminary meeting to establish a Dutch Lodge attracted 20 masons. But "owing to the formation of a lodge at Klipdrift under the English Constitution and the impossibility of getting a suitable tent, shed or room, the Brethren found it extremely difficult to establish a lodge".²⁰ A suitable building was the biggest handicap. "Buildings or even rooms fetch enormous sums and without a subscription list guaranteeing, say, £300 or £400 it will be next to impossible to secure a private room", he wrote.²¹

De Kiewiet points out that a year after the rush began "Kimberley was the most populous settlement in South Africa outside Cape Town with two churches, a hospital, a theatre

18. Richard Giddy Lodge, Minute Book, 22 July, 1875 - 1 July, 1886: Meeting, 7 October, 1875.

19. A 2223 Vol.17, DGMN, Letters Received, January, 1871 - December, 1871: Halkett-Brand, 6 December, 1871.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

and probably as many grogshops as the rest of South Africa put together. In 1871 the number of whites and blacks in Kimberley was reckoned at 50,000".²² Understandably room rents could be at this phenomenal level. But the Dutch masons eventually triumphed.

In 1873 there was only one lodge, Cosmopolitan at Kimberley, but "there was a flourishing community at Dutoitspan and another at Bulfontein", writes Rogaly.²³ Among the inhabitants of these two hamlets, both digger centres, there were many unattached Dutch brethren who were desirous of starting a new lodge. "The movement was engineered by Brother Mark L. Klisser, a well-respected Freemason who afterwards left the Diamond Fields and became the owner of the Royal Hotel, Cape Town".²⁴ He convened a meeting at the Court House, Dutoitspan, on 20 April, 1873. Among those attending were H. Fockens, Charles Sonnenberg, Thomas Gardner, J.J. Wilson, J.S. Olivier, R.J. Scholtz, F.W. Stamper, J. Whitycombe, P.J. Solomon and B.B. Venables.²⁵ Founder members also included T. Templehof, J. Marais, Nicolas de Kock, T.R. Malan, N. Rademeyer and Ikey Sonnenberg. Apart from the diggers there were merchants, accountants and professional men. They decided to work under the Grand East of the Netherlands and all proceedings would be in English unless a candidate wanted to be initiated in Dutch. F.W. Stamper was appointed first master.²⁶ A provisional warrant was received from Brand in Cape Town in June, 1873 to enable the lodge, known as Peace and Harmony, to begin work on St. John's Day, 24 June, 1873. On that day the new lodge was to give a banquet to which the Administrator,

22. C.W. De Kiewiet: History of South Africa, Social and Economic, p. 89.

23. A. Rogaly: History of Peace and Harmony Lodge, NC (typewritten MSS), p. 1.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., p.2.

26. Ibid., pp. 2 - 3.

Sir Richard Southey, was invited as were the master and wardens of Cosmopolitan Lodge. Southey declined the invitation, having accepted an invitation to a Masonic Ball on the same evening. However, the Cosmopolitan Lodge's master and wardens accepted their invitation to the banquet, "so who gave the ball and whether the banquet was held" is not known from existing records.²⁷ By 1878 Peace and Harmony had swelled its numbers to 103 from the original 30.²⁸

Dutoitspan became the venue in 1879 for a new English lodge, the Charles Warren Lodge, named after Sir Charles Warren, British officer and archaeologist. Warren was appointed in 1877 to deal with applications for land allocations and mineral rights in Griqualand West. In 1878 he served as colonel in command of the Diamond Fields Horse in the Gaika Galeka war. Returning to South Africa in 1884 after a four year break, he commanded an expedition of 4000 men to proclaim British rule in the Crown Colony of Bechuanaland. He returned to South Africa for the third time in December 1889, commanding the 5th Division under Sir Redvers Buller. He was defeated at Spioenkop on 24 January, 1900.²⁹

The petition was drawn up with members of Peace and Harmony applying for membership of the new lodge in order to qualify to sign the petition. On 9 April an emergency meeting of Richard Giddy Lodge was held to install R.M. Connolly as the first master of the Charles Warren Lodge. Kimberley lodges evidently worked together harmoniously.³⁰ Among the first initiates were several wellknown citizens of Kimberley, including David Harris, Tielman Johannes Roos and Rev. Canon

27. A. Rogaly: History of Peace and Harmony Lodge, NC, pp. 3 - 4.

28. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL SA NC: Returns Lodges 1878; A. Rogaly: History of Peace and Harmony Lodge, p.2.

29. Anon: Charles Warren Lodge, EC, pp. 1 - 2.

30. Charles Warren Lodge Minute Book, 9 October, 1879 - 18 December, 1890: Minutes 9 April, 1879 Meeting.

Gaul, who later became Archdeacon of Mashonaland. George Blackstone Williams, master during 1893 and 1894 and a great friend of Cecil Rhodes, was magistrate of Kimberley and later Chief Magistrate of Cape Town. C.A. Blackbeard, master from 1881 to 1882, was twice Mayor of Beaconsfield.³¹

The establishment of a new focal point for Freemasonry at the Diamond Fields weakened lodges on the perimeter. Several lodges complained of loss of members and some closed down. The master of De Vereeniging Lodge, Graaff-Reinet, Doctor G.M. Maasdorp, wrote in 1870 to Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic lodges in South Africa, Brand:

"Diamond fever is raging high here. No less than 17 of our members are to start north. Our Secretary and Treasurer were so excited they left without giving up their papers".³² In 1868 it returned 23 members, in 1870, 11.³³ Its sister lodge in Graaff-Reinet, the English Midland Lodge, apparently from records did not suffer such a grievous outflow of members.³⁴

Zur Eintracht at Somerset East told Brand: "We are losing several members to the diamond fields. We have lost all our surplus population". Despite this, membership remained constant, with 43 in 1870 and the same number in 1873.³⁵

S.A. Rutherford, master of another Dutch lodge, Flaming Star at Potchefstroom, complained: "Such an immense number of

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31. Anon: Charles Warren Lodge, pp. 3 - 4; KEA W.I. Macdonald: Cosmopolitan Lodge (typed), p. 15.
 32. A 2223 Vol.15, DGMN, Letters Received, January, 1870 - December, 1870: Maarsdorp - Brand, 28 August, 1870.
 33. A 2223 Vol.35, DGMN: Returns 1835 - 1874.
 34. T.G. Saunders: Brief History Midland Lodge 1862 - 1922, pp. 19 - 23.
 35. A 2223 Vol.15, DGMN, Letters Received January, 1870 - December, 1870: Zur Eintracht - Brand, 3 September, 1870; A 2223 Vol. 35, DGMN: Returns 1835 - 1874.

people and masons among them, have been drawn away to the Diamond Fields".³⁶ Membership fell from 50 in 1870 to 43 in 1873.³⁷

From Pretoria, Aurora Lodge told Brand: "In consequence of nearly all the Brethren having left for the Diamond Fields we cannot get together a lodge to elect officers and there are not enough master masons to fill the posts".³⁸ De Vriendschap at Adelaide (warranted 10 March, 1869) could not work "as so many have gone to the Diamond Fields".³⁹ It was closed because of lack of members in 1874.⁴⁰ From far-off Paarl in the Cape, Lodge Orange, resuscitated only in March, 1872, had two valid reasons for stopping work three months later. "We have no officers to work the lodge. Some have died. Others have gone to the Diamond Fields".⁴¹ Northern Lodge, Colesberg, quietly succumbed, its master, J. Orlepp informing Brand: "Northern Lodge is no longer in existence. Our members have dispersed".⁴²

Dutch lodge secretaries at that time were not enthusiastic about filling in membership returns. Their Provincial Grand Lodge meeting in Cape Town in 1874 heard that only nine lodges had made returns since 1870 and 14 were in arrears with dues.⁴³ The mother lodge of the Netherlandic Constitution, De Goede Hoop in Cape Town, lost numbers steadily, dropping

36. A 2223 Vol.18, DGMN, Letters Received, December, 1871 - December, 1873: Rutherford - Brand 3 June, 1872.

37. A 2223 Vol. 35, DGMN: Returns 1835 - 1874.

38. A 2223 Vol. 18, DGMN, Letters Received, December, 1871 - December, 1873: Aurora - Brand, 1 August, 1872.

39. Ibid., Vriendschap - Brand, 9 September, 1872.

40. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL SA NC, Annual Reports: 1875.

41. A 2223 Vol. 18, DGMN, Letters Received, December, 1871 - December, 1873: Orange - Brand, 17 March, 1872; Orange - Brand, 2 June, 1872.

42. A 2223 Vol. 14, DGMN, Letters Received, January, 1869 - December, 1869: Orlepp - Brand, 14 June, 1869.

43. A 2263 Vol.3, PGL SA NC, Letters Received, April, 1864 - January, 1879; PGL Report, August, 1874.

from 53 members in 1868 to 45 in 1872.⁴⁴ In contrast the new Dutch lodge on the Fields, Peace and Harmony, as recorded had grown from 30 members in 1873 to 68 in 1875 and 103 in 1878.⁴⁵

English lodges were perhaps even more reluctant than their Dutch colleagues to furnish returns to their Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town, an authority few of them outside the Western Cape recognised, as earlier recorded. Minute books and lodge histories only give hints of the drift of members to the diamond and gold fields. Port Natal Lodge recorded: "Many members of the lodge were attracted to the Transvaal by the discovery of gold there and to Kimberley by the discovery of diamonds and it had the effect of reducing membership".⁴⁶ Port Alfred Lodge, formed at Kowie on 15 October, 1873, recorded lean times in the early 1880s when often only five members were present, "many of the masonic brothers (having) climbed onto their donkeys and trotted off to the diggings to seek their fortune".⁴⁷

The two English lodges in Grahamstown - Albany and St. John's - were considerably weakened. "Many members of these bodies had joined in the rush to the diamond diggings, a movement which must have profoundly shaken the Cape. Merchants, professional men, farmers, marines and sailors were attracted by the magnetic prospects of easy wealth".⁴⁸ Membership of the Rose Croix Movement, a so-called high degree, gives a further pointer to the masonic move northwards. Adamanta Chapter, Kimberley, was the first English Rose Croix Chapter to be warranted in South Africa - on 8 July, 1873. Inspired by R.W. Giddy, appointed first Inspector General of South Africa on 3 October, 1873, Adamanta boasted 62 members in 1877.⁴⁹

44. A 2223 Vol.35, DGMN: Returns 1835 - 1874.

45. A 2263 Vol.16, PGL SA NC: Returns 1875 - 1898.

46. Anon: Centenary of Port Natal Lodge, 1858 - 1958, p.24.

47. W.H. Beresford: Early Years of Port Alfred Lodge, (typewritten MSS), p.5.

48. E.G. Dru Drury: St. John Rose Croix Chapter, Grahamstown, p.6.

49. Ibid., pp. 3 - 5.

In the same year, in contrast, Adelaide Chapter had 20 members, Queenstown 12, Grahamstown 15 and Bloemfontein 8.⁵⁰

Kimberley was not the only town to benefit from diamonds. Rising Star Lodge at Bloemfontein was in financial difficulties at the beginning of 1871. Its minutes of 1 February, 1871 record an urgent appeal by the master to members to pay their arrear dues. "Times were however on the mend with the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley and shortly afterwards the Treasurer reported he had a balance of £91.16.11 on hand".⁵¹ Obviously some of its members were enjoying the newly-found wealth that accrued to the Free State Republic.

However the lure of diamonds began to fade with the changing pattern of mining, "from muscle to machinery", from the small digger to the large organised mining companies. At the four great mines - the Kimberley, De Beers, the Bulfontein and Dutoitspan - there were 3200 full claims, many subdivided, writes De Kiewiet. Rockfalls and flooding took lives and a Mining Board was formed in 1874 by Southey, now Lieutenant Governor, to bring some order to this dangerous confusion. However, it had neither the money, skill nor authority to impose its will and soon organised capital, wielded by Cecil Rhodes, Barney Barnato and others, brought amalgamation of individual claims and eventually the establishment of one monolithic company, the De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd. by 1890.⁵²

Masonic temples soon became a feature in the Diamond Fields, with lodges building their own temples, no doubt, to escape the high rents. Cosmopolitan Lodge had its first meeting in its new building, "The New Temple, at Kimberley, New Rush,

50. E.G. Dru Drury: St. John Rose Croix Chapter, Grahamstown, p.6.

51. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years. Brief History Lodge Rising Star, Bloemfontein 1864 - 1945, p.16.

52. C.W. De Kiewiet: History of South Africa, Social and Economic, pp. 91 - 94.

De Beers" on 18 August, 1873.⁵³ The Dutch lodge, Peace and Harmony, with considerable speed, renovated premises behind the market square at Dutoitspan and held its first meeting there on 14 October, 1873.⁵⁴

The economic upsurge following the mining of diamonds did not reach the Cape and Natal until after 1870.⁵⁵ It brought fresh interest in Freemasonry with newfound prosperity, particularly in the formation of English lodges. On 15 September, 1873, provisional warrants were issued by the English Provincial Grand Lodge sitting in Cape Town for 3 new lodges - Wodehouse at Dordrecht, Port Alfred at Kowie and Meridian at Cradock.⁵⁶ Ripon at Colesberg and Zetland at Murraysberg were provisionally warranted in May, 1874.⁵⁷ In that year the District Grand Lodge, still controlling the whole of South Africa - at least in name only in the eastern districts - counted 22 lodges under its jurisdiction. "At no period since the establishment of the District Grand Lodge has the prosperity of the Craft in South Africa attained such eminence as at present", commented its Board of General Purposes, adding that the District Grand Treasurer, as a result, could report a favourable balance of £73.10 unlike in previous years.⁵⁸

The Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa claimed 21 lodges in 1874.⁵⁹

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- 53. KEA Cosmopolitan Lodge, Minute Book, 26 April, 1872 - 14 June, 1877: Meeting, 18 August, 1873.
 - 54. A. Rogaly: Peace and Harmony Lodge (typewritten MSS) pp. 3 - 4.
 - 55. C.G.W. Schumann: Structural Changes and Business Cycles in South Africa, 1806 - 1936, p. 136.
 - 56. PMC 1/1/2 PGL EC, Minute Book 9 June, 1871 - 10 April, 1879: Board of General Purposes 15 September, 1873
 - 57. FMH UGLE, Petitions and Warrants South Africa.
 - 58. PMC 1/1/2 PGL EC, Minute Book 9 June, 1871 - 10 April, 1879: Board of General Purposes 2 June, 1874.
 - 59. A 2223 Vol.16, PGL OF SA NC, Reports: Meeting 3 August, 1875.

MOVE TO INDEPENDENCE

The Dutch lodge Harmony at Richmond as recorded in Chapter I had publicly called for an independent Grand Lodge in South Africa, uniting all masons, through a circular dated 10 September, 1870 but it had evoked little reaction.

The years 1872 to 1875 reflected marked prosperity.⁶⁰ With the consequent expansion of Freemasonry, the unity movement emerged again. An English lodge, Joppa of Cape Town, issued a circular dated 25 February, 1875, urging that the time was now ripe for independence. The lodge had resolved on 3 February that, "taking into consideration the number of masons and lodges in the Colony of the Cape and adjoining states and the fact of the existence of Freemasonry in South Africa for more than a century, the time had arrived for taking steps with a view to establishing a Grand Lodge of South Africa as a means of uniting the masons under the various constitutions in the Colony and adjacent states" and to retain funds then sent overseas to the respective Grand Lodges.⁶¹

Its committee produced detailed statistics of the state of the Craft. It listed eleven lodges in the Western Province - eight Dutch and three English; fourteen in the Eastern Province eleven English and three Dutch; eight in the Midland Province - four English and four Dutch; five in the Free State - three Dutch and two English; two in the South African Republic - both Dutch, and three in Griqualand West - two English and one Dutch. The 22 English lodges had approximately 1167 subscribing members and the 21 Dutch 1114, giving a total of 2281. In all they sent to their respective Grand Lodges in England and Holland about £559 yearly. By contributing a

60. C.G.W. Schumann: Structural Changes and Business Cycles in South Africa 1806 - 1936, p.112.

61. A 2223 Vol. 21, DGMN, Letters Received October, 1874 - November, 1878: Joppa Lodge Circular 25 February, 1875; ACC 731, 1/1/4 De Goede Hoop, Minutes: 31 March, 1875.

little more and ending sending remittances overseas, South African masons would be able to afford their own Grand Lodge, Joppa claimed. Another £500 a year would be needed to maintain it and a further £1278 should be set aside for benevolence.⁶²

"With such a sum at its control, a properly constituted and responsible Grand Lodge could immediately set about the establishment of Masonic Benevolent Institutions and Schools" similar to those masonic institutions in England and the Continent.⁶³ Little advantage had accrued to masons in South Africa who had been contributing for some years to overseas' institutions, it added. Signed by W.T.Hawthorne, Alex Inglis and Thomas Gardner, this circular brought mixed reaction.⁶⁴ The two oldest lodges, the British and De Goede Hoop, both in Cape Town, rejected the appeal but for differing reasons.

Disdainfully, the British Lodge, after discussing the circular, resolved: "That the British Lodge No. 334, established 9 August, 1811, having for two-thirds of a century enjoyed all the privileges to which Lodges in England are entitled, undisturbed by any cause whatever and having every confidence in the present Government of the Craft, under the Constitution of England, fails to see any good cause for throwing off its allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England nor the necessity of establishing a Grand East in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope".⁶⁵

Soon afterwards, the senior Dutch lodge, De Goede Hoop, in a circular, pointed out that Dutch lodges would be placed under a great disadvantage by adopting the scheme for a South

62. A 2223 Vol.21, DGMN, Letters Received October, 1874 - November, 1878: Joppa Circular, 25 February, 1875.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. PMC 3/1/8, British Lodge, Minute Book, 1874 - 1879: Meeting 15 March, 1875.

African Grand Lodge. They were "more likely to augment their field of usefulness by adhering to the Grand East of Holland with its minimum cost of government".⁶⁶ It suggested that the constitutions should form a joint organisation to handle local charitable cases. It criticised proposals for contributions suggested by Joppa Lodge from lodges under a United Grand Lodge of South Africa. For a lodge with 100 members, dues would rise from £7.4 to £64.4, impossible for lodges to meet, it added.⁶⁷

The District Grand Master of the new Griqualand West English Division, Richard W.H. Giddy, saw the debate in terms of the political issues of the day. He wrote to Grand Lodge, London, that "there is a movement begun by Dutch masons, particularly those in the northern republics, to set up an independent Grand Lodge for lodges of all constitutions in South Africa.

"This independence scheme has been heartily taken up by Dutch lodges ... they see plainly its success would throw all power into Dutch hands ..."⁶⁸

"Perhaps a Grand Lodge of South Africa would be possible after South Africa becomes a federation of British colonies", he added.⁶⁹

He echoed the words of the British Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon who, the previous year, had launched his

66. CA Unlisted Temp. No.30, De Goede Hoop Lodge, Correspondence 1876 - 1884: Circular, 1876.

67. Ibid.

68. FMH, UGLE, File, Division of Districts in South Africa 1874 - 1882: Giddy - Grand Secretary, 27 September, 1875

69. Ibid.

federation scheme for South Africa which would ensure continued British supremacy, continued control of the diamond fields, an end to border disputes, the securing of the Southern African coastline, and, most important, the establishment of self-governing colonies within a British federation which would lessen the financial burden on Britain.⁷⁰ As Pro-Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, Carnarvon expressed similar views in his memo to the Grand Master in 1875 supporting the division of South Africa into separate masonic districts which would eventually absorb Dutch masonry in the two republics and end "the mischievous demand for emancipation from all allegiance and an independent Grand Lodge".⁷¹

The new masonic districts he had created, now full of authority, supported him. Meeting at Grahamstown to form the new English Eastern Division in November, 1876, delegates resolved: "That it having come to the notice of this conference that an effort may be made by a small portion of the Craft in the Western Province of the Colony to obtain a Grand Lodge for South Africa, this conference is of the opinion that the best interests of masonry in this District will be served by continuing its allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England. It is therefore requested that Grand Lodge will withhold its sanction to any such severance".⁷²

Individual lodges were less emphatic. The Cosmopolitan Lodge, the first lodge in Griqualand West, established at Kimberley, recorded on 5 July, 1875 in answer to Joppa's circular: "The time had not yet arrived for the formation

70. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years. A History of South Africa, pp. 302 - 304 (M.C. Van Zyl: States and Colonies in South Africa 1854 - 1902).

71. FMH UGLE, Grand Lodge Letters 1875: Pro-Grand Master - Grand Master, Prince of Wales, memo, 9 December, 1875.

72. DGL ED EC: Minutes of Meetings at Grahamstown on 15, 16, 17 November, 1876, p.7.

of a Grand Lodge for South Africa".⁷³ Its Dutch colleague, Peace and Harmony at Dutoitspan, however, believed the time had arrived to promote the establishment of a Grand Lodge and, if the scheme did not meet approval of the Netherlands, Dutch lodges should ask for a remission of fees to enable lodges to set up local benevolent institutions.⁷⁴

Rising Star, Bloemfontein, decided that the Joppa circular and Carnarvon's suggestion for the division of South Africa into districts were enough for it to declare itself independent. Its acting master wrote "on the one hand an effort is being made to establish a United Grand Lodge for South Africa in Cape Town, whilst on the other hand a suggestion has emanated from Grand Lodge to divide the Colony and Griqualand West into three District Grands - and at the same time the option has been given to us in Bloemfontein to act independently of any District Grand Lodge and to make our returns and communications direct to Grand Lodge in London".⁷⁵ It took the third option and the lodge severed its connection with the District Grand Lodge in Cape Town on 31 December, 1875.⁷⁶ Only in 1892 did it give up its independence to join the Eastern Division.⁷⁷

These representative views from Dutch and English lodges on Joppa's circular hardly reflected an overwhelming support for a United Grand Lodge in South Africa. The new English districts and lodges were anxious to keep their newly-won independence. Dutch lodges, now without the strong hand of Sir Christoffel Brand who had died on 19 May, 1875, nine months after retiring, took guidance from De Goede Hoop

73. W.I. Macdonald: Cosmopolitan Lodge, p.4.

74. KEA Peace and Harmony Minute Books, 29 April, 1873 - 19 June, 1878: Minutes, 7 June, 1875.

75. L.H. Wienand: First 81 years, Rising Star Lodge, pp. 18 - 19.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

Lodge, which supported the status quo.

Joppa Lodge still persisted in its scheme for a United Grand Lodge and arranged a meeting at the Athenaeum Hall, Cape Town, in November, 1876 to discuss it. As Southey was residing in Kimberley, the English Deputy District Grand Master of the Western Division, Charles Aiken Fairbridge, presided over a gathering of some 200. The question before them, he said, was to decide whether or not masons in South Africa "had not attained that stability and were not sufficiently numerous and powerful to be entitled to claim supervision of their own affairs independently of the control of the Grand Lodge ... as we in the Cape have taken upon ourselves Responsible Government in political affairs so the masonic fraternity, or, at all events, a great portion of them, thought the time had arrived for taking upon themselves the responsibility of self-government".⁷⁸ Fairbridge added that a mason at the Cape should be able to travel without suffering those inconveniences which existed at present "owing to certain differences in ritual in English and Dutch lodges".⁷⁹ It was unfortunate, he said, that the unification move had began at a time when Lord Carnarvon as Pro-Grand Master had divided the English masonic area into three sections, each of which was hardly likely to give up its independence, a reference to the formation of the three English districts, Western, Eastern and Griqualand West.⁸⁰

It was suggested at the Cape Town meeting that the three Craft degrees and the "side" degree, the Royal Arch, be under the English constitution and from the Royal Arch to the 33rd "high" degree under the Dutch - "A compromise and concession to both sides", said Fairbridge.⁸¹

78. The Cape Argus, 2 December, 1876: "Masonic Meeting".

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

Proponents of the movement for autonomy, both English and Dutch masons, argued that money sent overseas could be better used for charitable works at home while differences in ritual could be settled. The discussion finally concentrated on finances of a proposed grand lodge. This Fairbridge deplored. There were more important issues than money at stake: "Masonry had since its inception become the defender of civil and religious liberty", he added.⁸²

Eventually it was decided to set up a committee to make further financial investigation.⁸³ But, because of the opposition of the two senior lodges - the British and De Goede Hoop - as recorded, the issue was not taken further and only appeared again in 1892.

However, all hopes of unity between English, Dutch and Scottish members throughout South Africa by means of a local Grand Lodge disappeared with the start of the first South African War of Independence in December 1880.

WAR AND DEPRESSION, 1880 - 1899

While the Orange Free State, Natal and the Cape had prospered after the discovery of diamonds, the South African Republic suffered economically, having neither the mineral wealth of Griqualand West nor the flourishing sheep industry of the Free State and being handicapped with no direct access to the sea.⁸⁴

However, with the discovery of alluvial gold near Lydenburg in 1873, some economic relief could be expected. It was a mixed blessing, for the attraction of gold brought former

82. The Cape Argus, 2 December, 1876: "Masonic Meeting".

83. Ibid.

84. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years, A History of South Africa, pp. 261 - 263 (J.S. Du Plessis: South African Republic); C.W. de Kiewiet: History of South Africa, pp. 103 - 105.

diamond prospectors and miners flooding into the Transvaal, concentrating around Pilgrims' Rest. They were mainly foreigners who felt their only permanent future lay in bringing the Republic under Britain's authority.⁸⁵ They had an ally in Lord Carnarvon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, who believed only a federation of states under the British flag would solve the various political and economic problems in South Africa. The annexation of the Republic was to him a logical step and on 12 April, 1877 his envoy, Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, carried out Carnarvon's orders.⁸⁶

British rule was not accepted by the Transvaalers and strengthened their opposition to a federal South Africa and their determination to regain their republican independence.⁸⁷ "In their discontent was born a new and powerful patriotism" comments De Kiewiet.⁸⁸ Antagonism to the British administration grew. Despite Kruger's constant pleas to the burghers to avoid force, a meeting of 6000 burghers at Wonderfontein at the end of 1879 called for the immediate reinstitution of the South African Republic. The old Volksraad which had not met since 1877, assembled again in December 1880, proclaimed martial law, and on 16 December, 1880 the first shots were fired in the First War of Independence which lasted until March, 1881.⁸⁹ In the first move of this war the Transvaalers quickly cut off British garrisons in Potchefstroom, Pretoria, Rustenburg, Lydenburg and Marabstad in the Transvaal.⁹⁰

The defeat of the British at Majuba Hill on 27 February, 1881 brought a swift end to conflict and the regaining of

85. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p.262 (J.S. Du Plessis: South African Republic).

86. Ibid., pp. 263 - 264.

87. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, (M.C. Van Zyl: States and Colonies in South Africa, pp.306-7. 1854 - 1902.)

88. C.W. de Kiewiet: History of South Africa, p. 107.

89. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 264 - 270 (J.S. De Plessis: South African Republic.)

90. D.W. Krüger: 1st Anglo-Boer War (SESA, I, pp. 381-383)

Transvaal's independence subject to certain conditions.⁹¹

At the start of 1879 the Netherlands Constitution had three lodges in the Transvaal - Aurora at Pretoria, Flaming Star at Potchefstroom and Orange at Rustenberg.⁹² The English Constitution had one lodge, the Transvaal at Pretoria, founded in 1878.⁹³ This lodge apparently continued working even during the 89-day blockade of the town in 1880-1881, and Lady Bellairs, wife of the Commanding Officer of the Pretoria garrison, in her diary, commented that, to drive away the gloom of the blockade, many activities and amusements were organised. "Among these, the Worshipful Master assembled his brother masons at their hall in the town and the Good Templars followed suit with a meeting in theirs".⁹⁴

Further evidence of masonic enthusiasm in the difficult, trying days of the blockade is given by a one-man entertainer, Charles Du Val, presumably a mason, who arrived in Pretoria in November, a month before the siege began.

In his remarkable newspaper, News of the Camp, produced on the site, a notice announces in the issue of 25 January, 1881 that a masonic meeting will be held. "Colonel Gilden, the Garrison Commandant will grant passes to all members of the Craft desirous of attending. We need not say such an opportunity of assembling under similar auspices may not, and it is to be hoped, will not occur again".⁹⁵ John Keith, first master of the Transvaal Lodge, issued the summons

91. M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa II, p. 300.

92. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC: Meeting 27 August, 1880.

93. FMH UGLE: Returns, South Africa 1870 - 1900.

94. Lady Bellairs (ed.): The Transvaal War 1880 - 1881, pp. 177 - 178.

95. News of the Camp No. 14, 25 January, 1881, p.2.

to masons.⁹⁶

Du Val reported afterwards that the meeting was held at the masonic hall. "Slightly at variance with the motto of the brethren, 'Peace, love and Harmony' was their appearance, clad in the various costumes of war, many carrying rifles and bandoliers".⁹⁷ Inside the hall a unique system of ventilation - a line of loopholes knocked out of opposite walls - kept temperatures down. What is more surprising about this unique occasion is the fact that some 50 masons attended, presumably many of them from the regular forces under Colonel Bellairs, out of a total of 975 men defending the town.⁹⁸ The Dutch Lodge in Pretoria, Aurora, had succumbed in June 1879 through lack of support.⁹⁹

In Cape Town, where the war had hardly been felt, attempts were made by the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge to form an inter-constitutional educational fund to help widows' children and orphans of masons. Informal meetings between English and Dutch authorities were held at the instigation of a Dutch mason, M.L. Klisser, in 1880, but the first formal meeting in August 1881 was never held as the English District Grand Lodge representatives earlier resigned en bloc, leaving Klisser "insulted and disgusted" at their action.¹⁰⁰

English-Boer antipathies were overshadowed by the general economic depression lasting from 1882 to 1886 that affected the whole country, even the comparatively more secure Cape Town, following the war.¹⁰¹

96. News of the Camp No. 14, 25 January, 1881, p.2.

97. News of the Camp No. 16, 29 January, 1881, p.2.

98. Ibid; J. Lehmann: The First Boer War, p. 186.

99. A 2263 Vol. 6, PGL NC, Letters Received July, 1876 - January, 1885: Aurora - PGL, 13 June, 1879.

100. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC: Meetings, 27 August, 1880, 26 August, 1881.

101. C.W.G. Schumann: Structural Changes in South Africa 1806 - 1936, p. 112.

As a result, membership of masonic lodges dwindled as masons found they could not meet their annual subscriptions while contributions to lodge benevolent funds dwindled as calls on those funds increased. Distant lodges, where they worked, could not afford to pay their dues in turn to the Dutch or English Provincial Grand Lodges in Cape Town.

In 1882 the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge was told that only 3 - all in the Cape - out of 18 lodges on its roll had paid their dues in the previous year.¹⁰²

As the depression deepened more masons were struck off for non-payment of dues. The Board of General Purposes reported to the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge on 28 August, 1885: "The total number of Brethren suspended for non-payment of dues (which cause must be ascribed no doubt to the depression of trade that prevailed) during the year 1884 - 1885 (40) shows an increase of 700 per cent as compared with the previous year (5). In 1884 - 1885 the Lodge Peace and Harmony at Kimberley had been under the painful necessity of suspending 17 of its members; the Lodge De Goede Trouw 11; The Lodge Unie and the Lodge De Goede Hoop 2".¹⁰³ Eight members of Lodge Caledonia at Smithfield in the Orange Free State had been suspended for non-payment of dues. Though two new Lodges, Star of Border at Ficksburg and Star of Africa at Jagersfontein, had been established in 1884, adding 103 members in all, the number of subscribing members in the Province fell from 366 on 31 March, 1884 to 364 on 31 March, 1885 with 82 having resigned or been suspended.¹⁰⁴

A worried Provincial Grand Treasurer, J.F. Marshall, reported to the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in the following year:

102. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC: Meeting, 25 August, 1882.

103. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC: Meeting, 28 August, 1885, Board of General Purposes Report.

104. Ibid.

"While retrenchment and the Question of Ways and Means appears to be the universal theme of those in the profane world, I regret to say that we in this Worshipful lodge cannot escape the consequences of the continued depressed state of financial affairs in the Colony".¹⁰⁵ There were only 12 lodges working in the Colony and adjoining states. The Provincial Grand Lodge was desperately short of money. Net revenue for 1885 to 1886 would amount to £62.2s.6d. and expenditure £53, leaving "a slender balance of £9.2s.6. to meet any special calls upon the funds of the lodge", he said.¹⁰⁶ Contributions and dues from lodges to the ruling body, The Grand East of the Netherlands, fell from £50.10s. in 1885 to £24 in 1886.¹⁰⁷ Lodges of all constitutions were required through members' subscriptions to contribute to the upkeep of their South African-based authority and to their respective Grand Lodges overseas.

Conditions were no better in the "class" lodges. The first lodge in South Africa formed in 1772, De Goede Hoop at Cape Town, composed mainly of those of a higher social class, among others attorneys, civil servants, professional men and politicians, saw membership fall from 82 in 1879 to 60 in 1885.¹⁰⁸ Its sister lodge, De Goede Trouw, with its membership list showing shopkeepers, a chemist, a book-binder, clerks, a sea captain and a dealer, declined in numbers from 67 in 1881 to 54 in 1885.¹⁰⁹

105. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC: Meeting, 27 August, 1886, Treasurer's Report.

106. Ibid.

107. A 2263 Vol. 12, PGL NC, Letters Despatched (Financial) June, 1871 - August, 1899: PGM - Grand East of Netherlands, 11 September, 1886.

108. A 2223 Vol. 22, DGMN NC, Letters Received June 1876 - June 1891: Returns.

109. Ibid.; De Goede Trouw: Returns.

A flourishing lodge in 1872 with 111 members, Unie in Bloemfontein, shrank to 32 in 1884.¹¹⁰

The depression was the final blow to several lodges. Mr. F. McIntyre, the Master of Harmony at Richmond, wrote despairingly to the Dutch Deputy Grand Master, J.H. Hofmeyr, on 21 July, 1883: "We are unable to get a quorum owing to the decadence of Freemasonry in this area".¹¹¹ The lodge had been closed and the lodge building sold by auction. In 1879 it had returned 33 members.¹¹²

By 1885, the Netherlands Constitution had lost 18 lodges leaving 12 on the roll.¹¹³

The expiring lodges, mainly created after Brand's masonic missionary travels in the 1860s and 1870s, were situated in the Cape at George, Paarl, Somerset East, Swellendam, Stellenbosch, Willowmore, Graaff-Reinet, Beaufort West, Mossel Bay, Richmond, Adelaide and Colesberg; in the Free State at Kroonstad, Phillipolis and Bethulie; and in the Transvaal at Pretoria and Potchefstroom.¹¹⁴ Remaining in the Cape were lodges De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw in Cape Town, Frere at Riversdale, St. Jan at Malmesbury, Excelsior at Willowmore, Rising Star at Burghersdorp; Peace and Harmony at Kimberley; in the Free State: Star of the Border at Ficksburg, Star of Africa at Jagersfontein, Caledonia at Smithfield and Unie at Bloemfontein; in the Transvaal: Orange at Rustenburg.¹¹⁵

Not until 1887 did the Dutch Provincial Grand Treasurer, J.F.

110. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC: Meeting, 29 August, 1884.

111. A 2223 Vol. 26, DGMN NC, Letters Received, Harmony, Richmond, July 1868 - September 1883: MacIntyre - District Grand Master Hofmeyr, 21 July, 1883.

112. Ibid.

113. A 2263 Vol. 16, Provincial Grand Lodge: Meetings, 29 August, 1884, 28 August, 1885.

114. Ibid.

115. CA Unlisted, De Goede Hoop, Letters Book, 1877: Returns, Province, 3 April, 1885.

Marshall, report some signs of improvement in the province's finances. "There is by no means so much difficulty in obtaining settlement of dues from lodges working under our constitution and, although financial matters in the profane world show but little improvement, it is generally believed that the dawn of more prosperous times is not far distant".¹¹⁶

Returns for the Province - the whole of South Africa - showed contributing members in 1888 to total 374, up from 366 in 1885.¹¹⁷ However, by then lodges at Fiskburg and Smithfield had ceased working.¹¹⁸

Membership began to fall again as the new goldfields to the north opened up. "There has been a considerable falling off in the numbers of members of most of the lodges, owing principally to the discovery of the Gold Fields and the emigration resulting therefrom", reported the Board of General Purposes to the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge on 26 August, 1887.¹¹⁹ In the following year the Board again lamented that the falling off of membership was on the increase due to continued emigration to the Gold Fields.¹²⁰ In compensation, two new lodges on the Gold Fields were warranted by 1888, Jubilee at Barberton and Star of the Rand in Johannesburg.¹²¹

Thomas Wagner, Dutch Provincial Grand Secretary, complained to his superiors the next year, 1889, that no reports had been received from some lodges as "amongst other causes the continued migration to the Gold Fields has interfered greatly with workings in most places".¹²² However, the two new

116. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 26 August, 1887.

117. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 23 August, 1885; 31 August, 1888.

118. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 31 August, 1888.

119. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 26 August, 1887.

120. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 31 August, 1888.

121. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meetings, 1887, 1888.

122. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 30 August, 1889.

Gold Field lodges were working successfully, while a new lodge, Unie, had been provisionally warranted at Rietkuil, also in the Transvaal.¹²³

His colleague, J.F. Marshall, the Provincial Grand Treasurer, was more optimistic. After all commitments had been paid, the Provincial Grand Lodge's credit balance stood at £171.14s.9d. - "the largest available balance this Provincial Grand Lodge has had for many years ... Although prosperous times have apparently again returned, the prevailing excitement consequent upon extensive speculation in connection with the Gold Fields in the adjoining states has in a great measure retarded that return to prosperity in the masonic lodges working under this constitution. There is every reason, however, to hope that this is only temporary".¹²⁴

By 1891 membership of the Netherlandic Constitution had risen to 519, with two new lodges opened - both in the South African Republic: Libertas of Krugersdorp and De Broederband at Pretoria. Star of the Rand, Johannesburg, boasted 91 contributing members - 27 more than the mother lodge, De Goede Hoop, Cape Town.¹²⁵ By 1892 total membership was 587.¹²⁶ Nine of the 17 Dutch lodges were now based in the two northern republics - in the South African Republic at Rustenburg, Barberton, Johannesburg, Rietkuil, Krugersdorp and Pretoria, and in the Orange Free State at Jagersfontein, Winburg and Ficksburg.¹²⁷

Agitation grew for separated control from Cape Town. The question was first raised at the Provincial Grand Lodge annual meeting on 29 August, 1890 when the Deputy Grand

123. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 30 August, 1889.

124. Ibid.

125. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 28 August, 1891.

126. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 26 August, 1892.

127. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 25 August, 1893.

Master, J.H. Hofmeyr, was asked by H.W. Dieperink, representing Unie whether the meetings could be held alternately in Cape Town and the Transvaal. But Hofmeyr, tied by his duties as Master of the Supreme Court, admitted it was impossible for him to travel north.¹²⁸ This reluctance to allow some measure of masonic autonomy to the expanding north checked Dutch growth, in contrast to the expansion of English Freemasonry in the 1890s, and eventually led to a renewed call for an independent Grand Lodge for South Africa in that period.

In all, Dutch Freemasonry had 589 members in 17 lodges in 1893 and 866 in 21 lodges in 1898.¹²⁹

The English lodges suffered equally from the depression of 1882 to 1886 and the migration to the Gold Fields.

Concerned about late payment of subscriptions, Carnarvon Lodge, Cape Town, introduced a novel step to deal with offenders. It passed over outstanding accounts to the Tyler, Bro. Wright, and he was allowed 10 per cent of the fees. But even this did not assist lodge funds and lodge records show that, from 28 February, 1883 to 24 June, 1884, great

difficulty was experienced in collecting lodge subscriptions ...

"It reached bursting point on 23 January, 1884" when it was proposed and recorded that "owing to the backwardness of members paying their subs and the small interest of the lodge in general ... it would be better to give up the lodge".¹³⁰ However, this drastic step was avoided and the lodge continued.¹³¹

In Graaff-Reinet the depression hit Midland Lodge, another English lodge, which reported that in 1880, 13 members

128. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meeting, 29 August, 1890.

129. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL: Meetings, 25 August, 1893, 30 August, 1898.

130. Anon: History of Carnarvon Lodge, pp. 12 - 14.

131. Ibid.

were suspended for non-payment of dues.¹³² The Scottish lodge, Kaffrarian Celtic at King William's Town, encountered many difficulties in 1885 and 1886 and gave up its meeting place while "financial difficulties" continued until the end of 1888.¹³³

Buffalo Lodge at East London, founded in 1879, was in financial trouble in its third year. Its 1881 minutes reported that the Worshipful Master had been compelled to pay the District Grand Lodge's fees out of his own pocket and that Grand Lodge fees could not be remitted owing to an empty treasury.¹³⁴

Lack of interest and inability to meet dues closed the doors of English Constitution lodges in Aberdeen, Knysna, Colesberg, Murraysberg, Wellington, Alice, Willowmore, Springbokfontein (today called Springbok) and Kokstad in the late 1870s and early 1880s.¹³⁵

But the Craft took root in other towns. English lodges were formed or resuscitated in Cape Town, Simon's Town, Mossel Bay, Cathcart, Oudtshoorn, Knysna, Somerset East, Tarkastad, Uitenhage, Beaufort West, Port Alfred, and Umtata in the years from 1881 to 1888.¹³⁶

Once the Witwatersrand was proclaimed a gold mining area in 1886 the recession ended. "The whole of South Africa was drawn into the new mining boom which exceeded anything yet experienced", write Wilson and Thompson.¹³⁷

132. T.G. Saunders: Brief History Midland Lodge, Graaff-Reinet, 1863 - 1922, p. 20.

133. Anon: Centenary Kaffrarian Celtic, 1878 - 1978, p. 3.

134. H.C.O. Clough: History of Buffalo Lodge, East London, pp. 14 - 15.

135. FMH UGLE: Register of Lodges South Africa, 1870 - 1890.

136. Ibid.

137. M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson: Oxford History of South Africa I, pp. 13 - 14.

By 1896 it was estimated Johannesburg had 50,000 Whites but only 7,000 were Afrikaans-speaking. About 528,000 immigrants, mostly British, entered South Africa between 1875 and 1904.¹³⁸

English Freemasonry was to benefit more than its sister constitutions as its Grand Lodge in England eventually realised the advantages of setting up northern district grand lodges to establish local masonic authority and facilitate expansion. The membership figures illustrate this.

In 1893, as recorded, Netherlandic Freemasonry had 589 members in 17 lodges and 866 in 21 lodges in 1898, its territory encompassing the whole of South Africa.

Transvaal became the English masonic growth point as miners and entrepreneurs flocked north to search for gold. The English Constitution division in the Transvaal boasted 11 lodges and 360 members in 1895 at its inauguration and 24 lodges with a membership of 1838 in 1898.¹³⁹

In comparison, numbers in the English Eastern Division, inaugurated in 1878, rose from 1120 members in 24 lodges in 1893 to 1269 members in 28 lodges in 1898.¹⁴⁰ It had 752 members at its inauguration in 1879 and 20 lodges with 879 members in 1882.¹⁴¹

By 1885 its membership had grown to 1027, but there were 73 resignations and 49 exclusions for non-payment of dues in that year. Its Board of General Purposes told the 1886

138. F.A. Van Jaarsveld: From Van Riebeeck to Vorster 1657 - 1974, p. 308.

139. FMH UGLE: Transvaal Victoria Files 1860 - 1906, Returns.

140. DGL ED EC: Meetings, Board of General Purposes, 13 September, 1893, 14 September, 1898.

141. Ibid., Board of General Purposes, 9 June, 1881, 17 June, 1883.

District Grand Lodge annual meeting: "Though the continuance of the commercial depression has spread a gloom around, dues and fees for past as well as the outstanding liabilities of previous years from lodges have never been so regularly remitted, evincing in itself that the majority of the lodges were in a prosperous condition".¹⁴²

Despite the depression and the exodus to the Gold Fields, G.P. Perks, the Deputy District Grand Master of the Eastern Division, reported on 15 June, 1887 that his district had 1057 subscribing members. "I think we may venture to hope that the tide of depression in the (Cape) Colony has at last turned", he added.¹⁴³

His superior, Dr. C.J. Egan, the Eastern Division District Grand Master, told his District Grand Lodge two years later: "A wave of population had set in towards the Gold Fields and, as might be expected, a very large number of masons had left the Colony and their lodges". Some had resigned, others had been excluded for non-payment of dues. There was a slight decrease in membership, from 1057 in 1887 to 955 in 1888, in 25 lodges. "Many lodges had done no work during the year 1888 and some were practically dead", he added.¹⁴⁴ Conditions improved, however, and by 1893 membership had risen to 1120 and to 1269 in 28 lodges in 1898.¹⁴⁵

The English masonic district of Natal, formed in 1883 with nine lodges and 402 members, had 11 lodges and 421 members in 1886 and by 1899, 18 lodges and 787 members.¹⁴⁶ Its

142. DGL ED EC: Meetings, Board of General Purposes, 16 June, 1886.

143. Ibid., Meetings, Perks, 15 June, 1887.

144. DGL ED EC, Minute Book 15 November, 1876 - 11 September, 1895: Meetings, 15 June, 1887, 5 June, 1889.

145. Ibid: Board of General Purposes Report, 31 March, 1893; Ibid., Minute Book 14 September, 1895 - 9 September, 1903: Board of General Purposes, Report, 14 September, 1898.

146. FMH UGLE, Proceedings District Grand Lodge Natal 1882 - 1904: Returns 1883, 1886, 1899.

first District Grand Master, R.I. Finnemore, Resident Magistrate of Durban, led an enthusiastic band of masons, none apparently more enthusiastic than T.W. Savory who was initiated in the Port Natal Lodge in September 1882. On the 65th anniversary of his initiation he described how he almost missed that occasion. He was living 50 miles from Durban up the north coast and "on the appointed day, he set out early on horseback for Verulam which was the railhead then. On reaching the Tongaat River, however, he found it in flood and he was obliged to swim across it. This caused delay and resulted in his late arrival at Verulam where he was vexed to see in the distance the only train of the day proceeding on its way to Durban. In consequence he had to continue the journey on horseback; and he was so tired on arrival at Durban that he fell asleep in the late afternoon and did not wake until 7.50 p.m. only 10 minutes before he was due at the Masonic Hall in Smith Street. But he managed to dress in five minutes and he arrived at the lodge as the clock was striking eight."¹⁴⁷

"A few weeks after his initiation he was caught up in the gold rush and he went first to Moodies Gold Fields and thence to Barberton. But for several years he visited Durban twice a year to attend lodge. This entailed a ten days' ride on horseback to a railhead on the main line which at that time was Howick and the swimming of nine rivers - for there were no bridges in those days - and after a stay of a week or so in Durban he had a similar lengthy and hazardous return journey".¹⁴⁸ Port Natal lost many members to the gold fields - and to the hazards on the way. Meeting in July 1884, it recorded its deep sense of loss at the death of its Senior Deacon, G.J.M. Lockyer, who was drowned in the Crocodile River on his way to the Gold Fields.¹⁴⁹

147. Anon: Centenary of Port Natal Lodge 1858 - 1958, pp.23-24

148. Ibid.

149. Ibid.

With no district authority set up for English lodges in the Transvaal, masons anxious to start lodges at the Gold Fields turned to their nearest masonic centre, in their case, Natal District. Masons at Pilgrim's Rest Gold Fields, at Zeerust in the Western Transvaal, applied in 1885 to Finnemore for a provisional warrant to establish a lodge. Surprisingly in the same year, masons at Lydenburg in the Eastern Transvaal applied to establish a lodge called the Pilgrims. Finnemore sent on their applications to London.¹⁵⁰ He was rebuffed and the petitions refused. The Grand Secretary wrote that the Grand Master had "decided that in future no warrant will be issued for places outside British Territory except in very special circumstances. The petitions for the Pilgrims' Lodge and for the Pilgrims' Rest Lodge at Zeerust have therefore not been granted".¹⁵¹ In reply Finnemore pointed out that the unsuccessful petitioners had turned to the Grand Lodge of Scotland and were granted charters, Edinburgh not showing the scrupulous attention to territorial sovereignty as London.¹⁵²

Finnemore tried again in 1887. "Owing to the discovery of gold fields in the Transvaal, a large number of our countrymen have migrated thither and there is now a large English community established at a place called Barberton in the Transvaal. Among them are a large number of masons and, as they are mostly in prosperous circumstances, they are desirous

150. FMH UGLE, Loose papers Natal 1860 - 1906: Finnemore - Grand Secretary, 29 August, 1885.

151. C.W.P. Douglas-de-Fenzi: Records of English Freemasonry in District of Natal 1882 - 1894, Grand Secretary - Hollick, 28 July, 1885, 5 October, 1885, pp. 43 - 44.

152. FMH UGLE, Loose Papers Natal 1860- 1906: Finnemore - Grand Secretary, 26 August, 1886.

of establishing in their midst a masonic lodge under the English Constitution and under my jurisdiction. Despite your refusal to Zeerust and Lydenburg I hope this application is granted. The community is essentially English".¹⁵³ He pointed out: "the British Government at the retrocession of Transvaal still held suzerainty over that state and there is an English lodge at Pretoria, the capital".¹⁵⁴ Again the United Grand Lodge refused to issue a warrant to Barberton for the same grounds as before.¹⁵⁵

The expansion of the railway lines northward also encouraged new lodges to try to link up with Natal district. Masons in Vryheid and Ermelo in the Transvaal in 1894 applied for warrants to establish lodges and to join Natal District Grand Lodge.

Finnemore told London they wanted to be in Natal as a rail line was to be built to Maritzburg in that year but there was then no rail link from them to Johannesburg. Harrismith and Bethlehem lodges in the Free State, which were connected by rail with Natal, also looked south to Natal. But London was adamant. They were not in British territory.¹⁵⁶

However Finnemore did attract to his district some lodges outside Natal's border. One at Umzimkulu in East Griqualand under British protection joined Natal with the approval of London in 1886.¹⁵⁷ St. John's, Kokstad, entered the province in 1887.¹⁵⁸ Reporting this, Finnemore complained "other

153. FMH UGLE, Loose Papers Natal 1860 - 1906: Finnemore - Grand Secretary, 20 January, 1887.

154. Ibid.

155. Ibid., Grand Secretary - Finnemore, 20 April, 1887

156. FMH UGLE, Loose Papers Natal 1860 - 1906: Finnemore - Grand Secretary, 29 September, 1894; Grand Secretary - Finnemore, 13 November, 1894.

157. NEA DGL NATAL EC: Meeting, 22 September, 1886.

158. Ibid., Meeting, 26 March, 1888.

lodges would have been established in the Transvaal had it not been for the decision of the Most Worshipful Grand Master that no more charters or warrants will be granted to that territory now that it has ceased to belong to the British Dominions, a decision which, in my humble opinion, is greatly to be regretted on account of the large number of English masons in the Transvaal who are anxious to retain their allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England".¹⁵⁹ England only relaxed this rule in the 1890s through pressure from masons at the Gold Fields applying to form lodges and it allowed the formation of a District Grand Lodge there in 1895.¹⁶⁰

In that same year D.G. Greatbach, Master of Cosmopolitan Lodge at Kimberley, pressed London to form a Central Division District Grand Lodge sited at his town. "Gold has been discovered in what appears at present in immense quantities all over Griqualand West and some parts of Bechuanaland ... This will immediately lead to new towns springing up. It is all the more necessary to have a District Grand Lodge to check the indiscriminate formation of new lodges".¹⁶¹ Consent was given and R.M. Roberts was installed as the first District Grand Master of the new Central Division on 22 January, 1896 with authority over 491 members for "Griqualand West, Bechuanaland and the Protectorate".¹⁶² It was born out of the defunct Griqualand West Division which expired in 1882 and

159. NEA DGL NATAL EC: Meeting, 26 March, 1888.

160. FMH UGLE, Transvaal and Victoria File 1860 - 1906: Transvaal District Grand Lodge inaugural meeting, 30 April, 1895.

161. FMH UGLE, Loose Papers Central Division 1860-1906: Greatbach - Grand Secretary, 30 September, 1895.

162. KEA DGL CD EC, Minute Book 22 January, 1896 - 24 September, 1913: Inaugural Meeting, 22 January, 1896.

included eight lodges: Cosmopolitan (1872), Richard Giddy (1875), Charles Warren (1879) and Henry B. Loch (1888) at Kimberley; Octahedron (1872) at Barkley West; Stella (1887) at Vryburg; Franklin (1893) at Windsorton and Austral (1894) at Mafeking.¹⁶³ By 1899 membership had risen to 624.¹⁶⁴

Despite the wealth of the area, and presumably that of its inhabitants, the new masonic District Grand Lodge found itself immediately in financial trouble. At the first meeting of the Board of General Purposes in 1896 the necessary masonic regalia was ordered from London.¹⁶⁵ On arrival there were insufficient funds to pay the account of £89.18s.3d. The new District Grand Master Roberts had to pay it himself.¹⁶⁶

Membership in the Western Division of the English Constitution, covering mainly the Western and Southern Cape, was not as seriously affected by the depressions of the '80s and '90s nor by the attraction of diamonds and gold. Despite the division of South Africa into districts and the loss of most of its masonic territory in 1876, the new Western Division had increased the numbers of its lodges considerably. The senior lodge was the British (1811) in Cape Town. Also in the Mother City were Joppa (1861), Carnarvon (1877) and Albion (1887). Phoenix was warranted at Simon's Town in 1880, St. Blaize at Mossel Bay in 1881, Beaufort West (1881), Phoenix of Namaqualand (1885), Cango (1885) at Oudtshoorn, Unity (1886) at Knysna, and Worcester (1876). Five new lodges based in Cape Town were warranted in the 1890s, i.e. Woodstock (1890),

163. KEA Richard Giddy Lodge, Minute Book 22 July, 1875 - 1 July, 1886: Minute, 1 March, 1883; KEA DGL CD EC, Minute Book, 22 January, 1896 - 24 September, 1913: Inaugural meeting, 22 January, 1896.

164. KEA DGL CD EC, Minute Book, 22 January, 1896 - 24 September, 1913: Board of General Purposes Report, 15 March, 1899.

165. Ibid., Board of General Purposes, Meeting, 22 January, 1896.

166. Ibid., Board of General Purposes, Meeting, 21 December, 1896; R.C.Dowie: History of Central Division 1876 - 1976, (typed MSS), pp. 2 - 3.

St. George's (1894), Metropolitan (1894), Wynberg (1895), Israel (1897) and Stellenbosch (1897). Joppa was erased in 1882 and Albion in 1894.¹⁶⁷

On 1 January, 1894 the Western Division boasted 9 lodges with 540 members and at the end of the year 11 lodges with 714 members, two new lodges - St. George's and Metropolitan - both of Cape Town, adding 77 new members.¹⁶⁸ It stood at 757 in 12 lodges on 1 January, 1895.¹⁶⁹ The same 12 lodges on 1 January, 1897 reported 757 members, but by the end of the year, with three new lodges - Stellenbosch, Unity at Knysna and Israel at Cape Town - the roll had shot up to 845.¹⁷⁰

Though the depression of 1882 to 1886 showed little effect on membership, the depression from 1897 to 1899 resulted in 7,82% of the Western Division total of 959 masons being in arrears with their dues in 1898. Membership dropped to 950 in 1899, with 8,52% in arrears, but rose to 1123 in 1900. This reflected the exodus of refugees including masons from the northern republics, during the Second War of Independence to the Cape.¹⁷¹ This upward trend continued for the same reason in 1901 to 1262, while the division, in common with other masonic districts, had an unprecedented rush of new members after the war. In 1902 it returned 1512 members.¹⁷²

THE 1892 INDEPENDENCE MOVE

The United Grand Lodge for South Africa movement, having

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- 167. FMH UGLE: Register Warrants and Petitions, South Africa 1812 - 1900.
 - 168. PMC 1/1/4 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 20 July, 1891 - 14 April, 1903: Board of General Purposes, Report, Membership 1 January, 1894 and 31 December, 1894.
 - 169. Ibid., Meeting, 17 March, 1896, Returns.
 - 170. Ibid., Meeting, 15 March, 1898, Returns.
 - 171. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1920, Comparative Table of members in arrears, pp. 19 - 20.
 - 172. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1920, pp. 19 - 20.

slumbered since 1875, awoke, following the increased masonic activity of the 1890s which established solid bases in the Cape, Natal, Free State and, in 1895, the Transvaal. Some Freemasons felt they were strong enough to challenge their authorities overseas and assert their claim for independence. They were backed by an emergent masonic press - The S.A. Freemason - edited by W. Darley-Hartley, a pastmaster of Buffalo Lodge, East London, at first published weekly in 1887 and later irregularly from that city, and the S.A. Masonic Record published monthly by J.C. Juta of Cape Town, first in January 1893 and edited anonymously.¹⁷³ Through his journal Darley-Hartley revived the call for S.A. Masonic independence and managed to organise a conference at the Masonic Temple, Kimberley, on 18 October, 1892 to consider forming a Grand Lodge of South Africa. His efforts were not recognised by the masonic authorities but nearly 500 masons did attend.¹⁷⁴

Understandably the editor of the magazine was enthusiastic later about the deliberations of the conference. Addressing the meeting, he said there were 97 lodges in South Africa with a total membership of 3,500, yet Utah with only 3 lodges had its own Grand Lodge and South Australia also with only 38.¹⁷⁵

A.E. Austin opposed the proposal. Assimilation of the different rituals was impossible, he said. The conference rejected a suggestion that Cecil John Rhodes, a mason, should be the first Grand Master of a United Grand Lodge, greeting it with laughter.¹⁷⁶

Dutch masons present, reported Darley-Hartley, were almost

173. Pinelands Masonic Centre Library, Masonic journals; District Grand Lodge Transvaal EC Library, Masonic journals

174. S.A. Freemason, 3 November, 1892, p. 42.

175. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

176. *Ibid.*

all unanimously in favour of a separate Grand Lodge. The Rev. Oxley-Oxland from the English Natal Division said many Natal masons favoured unity. Eastern Province masons were lukewarm, but agreed to send out circulars to their lodges seeking opinions. A general vote on the proposal for a separate Grand Lodge for South Africa resulted in 227 for and 241 against, while 25 were non-committal.¹⁷⁷

Darley-Hartley summarised in his journal the pros and cons of masonic independence. The establishment of a Grand Lodge for South Africa would end competition between the masonic constitutions and would stop "undue multiplication of lodges". It would bring to an end the sending of money abroad to the various Grand Lodges. A separate Grand Lodge would be able to legislate for "special South African needs". It would end diversity in regalia and ritual and bring amalgamation of local charities.¹⁷⁸

The "cons" against independence included the injunction not to "break with old traditions in masonry" which he accepted. A new Grand Lodge would carry little weight in the masonic world, it would introduce unfavourable new practices in ceremonies, there were not men of "sufficient mental calibre and leisure time to study masonic ritual and jurisprudence sufficiently to become final authorities on these matters".¹⁷⁹ There were geographic difficulties, while there was the danger that Cape Town might dominate affairs and the expense of running a Grand Lodge might be too great.¹⁸⁰

The Dutch Deputy Grand Master in South Africa the Rev. D.P. Faure, reported back to the Provincial Grand Lodge of the

177. S.A. Freemason, 3 November, 1892, p. 42.

178. S.A. Freemason, 23 September, 1891, pp. 399 - 400.

179. S.A. Freemason, 30 September, 1891, pp. 407 - 408.

180. Ibid.

Netherlands in South Africa in August, 1893 in strong terms about the Kimberley conference. "At the meeting of the Board of Provincial Grand Lodge officers which met at the beginning of that month (October, 1892), I submitted a draft of the letters to be addressed to the chairman of the meeting expressing strong disapproval of the scheme and stating the reasons why we objected to the change".¹⁸¹ However his letter only reached its destination, for some reason, after the meeting had dispersed.

He had written that he had seen in a masonic paper that "on an appeal from some Australian Lodge, the Grand Lodge of England has quite recently reaffirmed the principle laid down in the 219th Rule of its Constitution, which says that: 'Should the majority of any Lodge determine to retire from it, the power of assembly remains with the rest of the members, but should the number of members remaining at any time be less than three, the Warrant becomes extinct'".¹⁸² This decision, he had written, was, of course, fatal to the proposed scheme, "for there is scarcely a lodge in South Africa in which there will not be found at least four dissentients, and these four remaining in possession of the Charter, the Lodge cannot join the S.A. Grand East (United Grand Lodge). The new body may therefore be regarded as having died before its birth".¹⁸³ The English District Grand Lodges ignored the conference, making no reference to it in their annual reports.¹⁸⁴

A proponent of unity, the S.A. Masonic Record, published from Cape Town, editorialised in September, 1893:

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- 181. A 2263 Vol.16, PGL NC: Meeting, 25 August, 1893, Faure's report.
 - 182. Ibid.
 - 183. Ibid.
 - 184. PMC DGL WD ED EC: Meetings, 1892, 1893.

"The result of the voting after the masonic conference held at Kimberley shows that the majority of the Craft in South Africa are at present indisposed to forward the scheme of a United Grand Lodge for this part of the world ... day by day the urgent necessity for the creation of a Grand Lodge of South Africa becomes still more apparent; not only as a means of removing, or at all events, of greatly lessening many of the incongruities which now exist but also of causing the cement of Brotherly Love to be more generally and evenly spread throughout our Masonic Community".¹⁸⁵ The Record speculated that the "apathy and indifference towards unity arose not only from ignorance of the benefits and advantages that would accrue from its adoption but from unfraternal jealousy".

"The march of improvement is hindered by a wall of prejudice reared by impatient Conservatism". In Australia and New Zealand "it has been found absolutely necessary to institute independent Grand Lodges. In America independent Grand Lodges are found in every state".¹⁸⁶

"Why should we continue to send out of South Africa to distant foreign Grand Lodges of great wealth and many resources, regular monetary payments when every penny we can raise is greatly needed for our own immediate charities?", it asked.¹⁸⁷

With a local United Grand Lodge, the money could be kept for South African charities. Again a local United Grand Lodge could settle urgent matters quickly without existing delays while the European Grand Lodge would give the local movement their full support as they had done in other colonies, it claimed.¹⁸⁸

185. S.A. Masonic Record, 17 September, 1893, p. 97.

186. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

187. *Ibid.*

188. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

The words of the anonymous editor failed to provoke reaction and in the March, 1894 issue he pondered: "I wonder if the United Grand Lodge scheme is dead or merely sleeping".¹⁸⁹

The opponents to the scheme "although, at present the majority, are composed of a number of those possessing feather bed offices in the Craft and there will be some trouble to get them displaced from their snuggeries".¹⁹⁰

He advocated urgent reform in Freemasonry in South Africa without specifying why it was needed or what steps were necessary, but declared: "Responsible government is merely the outcome of intelligent liberalism and must eventually be acknowledged as the only panacea for our masonic evils and incongruities".¹⁹¹

The United Grand Lodge movement slept on until in May, 1894, by which time the Editor of the Record had changed tactics and advocated a United Grand Lodge for the Transvaal, where Freemasonry was making such rapid advances with the formation of new lodges in the new towns created by the gold boom.

A United Grand Lodge for the Transvaal would, he said, set "a noble example to their more slow-going and conservative brethren, the denizens of the Cape Colony, and if the Gold Fields masons were but to set about the project, what a magnificent organisation it might soon become - what a power it would be in the land. Meanwhile, trying to work up enthusiasm in the Cape for a United Grand Lodge was similar to flogging a dead horse".¹⁹²

The Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge agreed with him. It assured its Grand Lodge in the Netherlands: "There exists at present... no grievances in our lodges, that no complaints are heard of and

189. S.A. Masonic Record: 3 March, 1894, Notes by Editor, p.74

190. Ibid.

191. Ibid.

192. Ibid., 5 May, 1894, pp. 41 - 42.

that of the movement on foot some years ago in favour of a South African Grand East (Grand Lodge) nothing is now perceptible. The lodges desire to continue to belong to the Order of the Netherlands".¹⁹³

TRANSVAAL AND THE JAMESON RAID

Among the many Freemason diggers who flocked to the Gold Fields were George Richards, a Cornish miner, a Warden of Richard Giddy Lodge in Kimberley in 1885, and John Edward Green, an accountant who was Past Master of Meridian Lodge, Cradock.¹⁹⁴ Richards was to become the first District Grand Master of the English District Grand Lodge of the South African Republic formed in 1895 and was later involved in the Jameson Raid affair.¹⁹⁵ Both organised a petition to London in 1887 for another English lodge in the Transvaal but were rebuffed by United Grand Lodge which reiterated that no new lodge would be warranted if it were not on British soil.¹⁹⁶

Commenting on this decision, the S.A. Freemason wrote:

"The development of the Gold Fields is working such a revolution in South African society that it is by no means improbable that a few more years may see the balance of national locale so altered that the English colony of the Cape of Good Hope may become the stronghold of Dutch influence and the Dutch Republic of the Transvaal the headquarters of English feeling. A rapid exodus is going on from the old

193. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Meeting, 29 November, 1895, petition to Netherlands.

194. P. Butterfield: Centenary, First 100 Years of English Freemasonry in Transvaal, pp. 79 - 80; Anon: History Richard Giddy Lodge, p. 5.

195. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1945: Inaugural meeting, 30 April, 1895; SESA 9, p. 270 (D.W. Krüger: Reform Committee).

196. S.A. Freemason, 30 November, 1887, p. 57.

colony to the Transvaal and those taking part are with very few exceptions British colonists. Your Dutch son of the soil has no vocation in the Gold Fields ... membership of Netherlandic Constitution lodges is largely British or Kapenaars. Anglicised Freemasonry in the Transvaal must be built up on British lines".¹⁹⁷ The magazine deplored London's refusal to allow another English lodge at the Gold Fields.¹⁹⁸

Transvaal Lodge at Pretoria, warranted in 1878, became the focal point for fresh attempts to open new lodges after 1887. Two members of this lodge went to England to urge the Grand Master, Edward, Prince of Wales, to remove his ban on warranting English lodges on foreign soil and, through their persuasion, the Grand Master reversed his decision and agreed to consider applications for lodges in the Republic.¹⁹⁹ Welcoming the change of policy, the S.A. Freemason wrote: "Transvaal is not a foreign country. The population is mainly English-speaking and 9 out of 10 masons are from England".²⁰⁰ Significantly it added: "England's decision has avoided English Freemasons forming a Grand Lodge of their own in the Transvaal".²⁰¹

Spurred by London's new view, Transvaal masons were quick to submit applications for three new lodges - Johannesburg Lodge, Royal Albert at Klerksdorp and El Dorado at Malmani, another gold mine area. All three were warranted on 24 May, 1889.²⁰² The Scottish masons were slightly ahead of their English brethren. The first lodge in the mining camp of Johannesburg, the Golden Thistle, warranted on 21 September, 1887, held

197. S.A. Freemason, 30 November, 1887, p. 58.

198. Ibid.

199. Ibid., 20 November, 1888, p. 32.

200. Ibid.

201. Ibid., p. 33.

202. FMH UGLE: List of Warrants and Petitions, South Africa.

its first meeting in November that year and later Captain von Brandis, Special Landdrost and also a Dutch mason, laid the foundation stone for its masonic temple which was completed in September, 1888, at a cost of £1500. Meanwhile Dutch masons had formed the Star of the Rand in January, 1886.²⁰³

During 1893, London granted warrants for the Gold Fields Lodge at Johannesburg, Boksburg Lodge, Jeppestown Lodge, Zoutpansberg Liberty Lodge at Pietersburg and Germiston Lodge.²⁰⁴

A move to set up a local District Grand Lodge for the Transvaal began in 1891 when J.E. Green wrote to London suggesting the scheme in order to secure the uniformity of working and also to weld the scattered interests into one harmonious whole.²⁰⁵ However, his suggestion remained dormant until 1892 when he and G. Richards, signing themselves Past Masters of Johannesburg Lodge, petitioned Grand Lodge again for a local District Grand Lodge. The petition claimed this was necessary to control the formation of new lodges in the Transvaal "to avoid irregularities and abuses"; there was a need for a controlling influence; it would be better for local charities; a District Grand Lodge would attract unattached Freemasons who had come from various parts of the world; and finally a "Transvaal geographically isolated masonically

203. S.A. Freemason, Vol.III, 1889 - 1890, p. 233.

204. FMH UGLE: List of Warrants and Petitions, South Africa.

205. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File 1860 - 1906:
Green - Grand Lodge, April, 1891

could prevent its lodges from joining a scheme for a United Grand Lodge in South Africa".²⁰⁶ There were now in Johannesburg one English, one Scottish and one Dutch lodge. "Nearby there are 4 English, 3 Scottish and 2 Dutch ... a District Grand Lodge would be a boon not only to masons but British subjects also", they added.²⁰⁷ But London wanted to make sure all lodges in the South African Republic agreed and finally delegates of 7 of the 10 English lodges in the republic met on 7 July, 1894, to discuss it. The voting was 5 for, 2 against.²⁰⁸

At this meeting G. Richards was nominated District Grand Master Elect, and, on the inauguration of the new district on 30 April, 1895, was made first District Grand Master.²⁰⁹ One of the objectors to the last, Transvaal Lodge at Pretoria, petitioned Grand Lodge successfully to remain out of the new district.²¹⁰

Attracted by the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, hundreds of immigrants had flocked to the area to help found the city of Johannesburg and clamour for the franchise and a share in the government. President Paul Kruger and the conservative Boers who formed the majority in the Volksraad opposed moves to give equal voting rights to the Uitlanders, as the foreigners were labelled by Kruger, fearing that, by so doing, they would lose control of the Republic. Kruger feared, too, that the British Government would side with the Uitlanders to the detriment of his country's interests.

206. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria file 1860 - 1906: Petition 22 October, 1892.

207. Ibid.

208. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria file 1860 - 1906: Richards - Grand Secretary, 22 July, 1894.

209. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1915: Inaugural meeting, 30 April, 1895.

210. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria file 1860 - 1906: Pretoria - Grand Secretary, April, 1895.

For him, therefore, the benefits of the mining industry would be used only for the Republic and its citizens. But he undertook to consider their grievances, promising equal treatment which would not, however, include full enfranchisement and normal representation on the Volksraad.²¹¹

Many of the Uitlanders' grievances were genuine. For instance, they suffered heavy taxation. Their language - English - was restricted in education and government. In commerce they were hit by monopolies, for instance, in water, electricity and dynamite, given by the government to individuals. Their newspapers and their right to public meetings were restricted. In 1892 they formed the Transvaal National Union to work for liberal rights, and on 26 December, 1895 it published a manifesto addressed to the people of the Republic outlining their grievances.²¹²

As their petitions to redress their wrongs were being ignored, the Uitlanders considered other forms of action and the Reform Committee, which took over the affairs of the National Union, sketched out plans to import arms and raise a revolt against the Government of the South African Republic. The Reform Committee, whose members included financiers, mine owners and professional men, had the backing of the large gold mining houses.²¹³

For assistance they turned to the Cape Colony Premier, Cecil John Rhodes. As managing director of the mining company, Goldfields of S.A. Ltd., he was intimately concerned with events in Johannesburg. Since 1894 he had considered using the Uitlanders in Johannesburg to bring down the government of the Republic and thus bring the Transvaal into his concept

211. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa pp. 281 - 285. (J.S. Du Plessis: The South African Republic).

212. Ibid., p. 285.

213. SESA 6 pp. 178 - 182. (W.S. Mackie: Jameson Raid).

of a united South Africa under the British flag. He sponsored the planned uprising in Johannesburg, which was to be supported by a military raid led by his lieutenant, Dr. L.S. Jameson. Once the operation had succeeded, Transvaal would be changed into a self-governing British colony. He was misled, however, in his calculations for success, believing wrongly that the Uitlanders constituted the larger section of the population and not taking full cognizance of the internal dissension among the Uitlanders about means to redress their grievances and, more particularly, their lack of arms. Not all members of the Reform Committee supported revolt. Some wanted a reformed republic free of British sovereignty while others felt the threat of an armed revolt might persuade Kruger to relent.²¹⁴

This collection of mining magnates and professional men, one of whom was the newly appointed District Grand Master of the Transvaal, Richards, was thus not well fitted to manage a successful revolt. By December, 1895 the Reform Committee faced a critical situation. Dr. Jameson, Rhodes' principal lieutenant in the recent Matabele War, had by now mustered a force at Pitsani near Mafeking and west of Pretoria ready to march on Johannesburg.²¹⁵

The day of the revolt was fixed for 28 December, 1895, but all the promised arms for the Reform Committee had not arrived in Johannesburg and the number of volunteers fell short of expectations. Jameson was telegraphed by Rhodes' agent, Dr. F. Rutherford Harris, not to move and it was hoped the insurrection would be postponed. But the impetuous Jameson refused to acknowledge the order and, on the evening of 29 December, he and his force of 437 officers and men of the Mashonaland Mounted Police crossed into the Transvaal.²¹⁶

214. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 281 - 288, (J.S. Du Plessis: The South African Republic).

215. H.M.N. Hole: The Jameson Road, p. 93.

216. SESA 6, pp. 179 - 180 (W.S. Mackie: Jameson Raid).

Hearing of the invasion, the Reform Committee set up a provisional government in Johannesburg, but, short of arms and men, they soon accepted an invitation from Kruger to negotiate. Without their assistance, Jameson was forced to capitulate with his men and he and his officers were quickly shipped to England for punishment.²¹⁷ The ringleaders of the revolt, 64 of the Reform Committee, including Richards, were arrested. Four were sentenced to the death penalty, later commuted by President Kruger, while the remaining 60, one of whom was Richards, were fined and released upon an undertaking they were not to engage in politics for three years. All had admitted guilt on charges of high treason.²¹⁸

The first anniversary of the founding of the District Grand Lodge of the Transvaal was held on 28 April, 1896, with its District Grand Master, Richards, in detention.²¹⁹

Masonic circles were astonished at Richards' part in the abortive revolt. The United Grand Lodge of England heard with surprise from Boksburg Lodge that it had protested about Richards reaction to the "late crisis in Johannesburg" referring to the Jameson Raid. "His name appeared as one of the number of the so-called Reform Committee in Johannesburg. The arms and ammunition were distributed by the said committee for the protection of life and property, it is said, against natives and other men of low character, the general opinion, however, being that the Reform Committee was really formed against the laws of the country and for the purpose of subverting the Government of this state; that these arms were distributed against the existing laws and that W. Bro. Richards, a member of the Reform Committee, aided, abetted and countenanced such action by not publicly withdrawing his name from the said committee; that he was arrested on a

217. E. Packenham: Jameson' Raid, pp. 90 - 94.

218. SESA 9, p. 270. (D.W. Krüger: Reform Committee)

219. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1915: Meeting, 28 April, 1896.

charge of high treason together with a number of other members of the said committee, all of whom are now undergoing preliminary examination but who are released on bail".²²⁰ Richards had acted contrary to his (masonic) obligation to respect the law of the land, Boksburg added.²²¹

Not only is it incumbent on a mason to refrain from political, religious or social discussion in a lodge, but also to respect the government of the country in which he resides and not to take part in subversive activities against that government.²²²

Richards, however, had already written to England on 23 March, 1896, denying he had been concerned in any plot or conspiracy against the Government of the country (S.A. Republic). He said he would make a personal explanation to the Grand Master and later that year left for Britain.²²³ But Boksburg now faced the wrath of the leaderless District Grand Lodge. Its Board of General Purposes decided that "Boksburg had overstepped the rules of masonry and masonic etiquette by discussing political questions in open lodge, especially after a written warning by the District Grand Secretary that it is out of their province".²²⁴ The Master was called on to apologise.²²⁵ Dr. J.P. Ziervogel of Boksburg, who had put the original resolution to the lodge condemning Richards, refused to apologise. He wrote to the

220. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File 1860 - 1906: Boksburg - Grand Secretary, 16 April, 1896.

221. Ibid.

222. Masonic Ritual.

223. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File 1860 - 1906: Richards - Grand Secretary, 23 March, 1896; TEA DGL TVL EC, Board of General Purposes, Minute Book 7 May, 1895 - 5 July, 1904: Meeting, 5 June, 1896.

224. TEA DGL TVL EC, Board of General Purposes, Minute Book, 7 May, 1895 - 5 July, 1904: Meeting, 31 March, 1896.

225. Ibid.

Grand Secretary: "The District Grand Secretary had pleaded guilty and has paid the penalty of one of the greatest crimes he could possibly commit against this country".²²⁶

Eventually, Boksburg recanted and its officers attended the Board of General Purposes in Johannesburg personally to apologise and rescind the resolution.²²⁷

Despite this setback English Freemasonry flourished in the north. Richards could report to London that, by 1898, there were 24 English lodges in the Transvaal with 1838 members.²²⁸ By October, 1899, when the second War of Independence began, the District Grand Lodge of the Transvaal could number 25 lodges of the English Constitution after a short 4½ years' existence.²²⁹ However, the war stopped most masonic activity and all English Lodges in the Transvaal were placed in recess by the Deputy District Grand Master, Charles Aburrow. Richards had already gone to England where he remained for the duration of the war.²³⁰

The Jameson Raid had the effect of increasing polarising tendencies in White South African society. It worked against any possibility of unity and widened the gulf between Boer and British. It encouraged a resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism on the one hand and brought into being the South African League in 1896 to uphold British supremacy and ensure British control of the Transvaal. Most important, it strengthened

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226. TEA DGL TVL EC, Board of General Purposes, Minute Book, 7 May, 1895 - 5 July, 1904: Ziervogel - Grand Secretary, 16 June, 1896.
227. TEA DGL TVL EC, Board of General Purposes, Minute Book, 7 May, 1895 - 5 July, 1904: Meeting, 19 June, 1896.
228. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File 1860 - 1906: Richards - Grand Secretary, 1 October, 1898.
229. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File 1860 - 1906: Returns, 1899.
230. FMH UGLE, Transvaal, Victoria File 1860 - 1906: Aburrow - Grand Secretary, 29 September, 1899.

the desire of the British policymakers to subjugate the Republic.²³¹

Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, despite his concealed part in the Jameson Raid, persisted in this design, aided by an equally bold British imperialist, Alfred Milner, who arrived at the Cape as High Commissioner in 1897. Milner, believing that a gold rich Transvaal under Afrikaner control was a threat to British supremacy, used every means to eliminate it. Considerable diplomatic pressure was exerted on Kruger, who had been re-elected to the presidency in 1898. But Milner needed an advantage to interfere directly. A petition in 1899 from 21,684 Uitlanders to Queen Victoria, listing their grievances, proved admirable for his purpose to press Kruger for Uitlander reform or war.²³²

A last-minute conference was held in May, 1899, at which Milner and Kruger failed to agree on citizenship rights for Uitlanders. Milner made fresh demands in September, 1899, to receive an ultimatum from Kruger, and the Second War of Independence had begun.²³³ Gold and British imperialism had brought the start of a desperate struggle that was to last from 11 October, 1899 to 31 May, 1902.²³⁴

231. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa pp. 318 - 320. (M.C. Van Zyl: States and Colonies in South Africa 1854 - 1902); M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa II, 1870 - 1966, pp. 320 - 321.

232. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 321 - 322 (M.C. Van Zyl: States and Colonies in South Africa 1854 - 1902).

233. Ibid., pp. 322 - 323.

234. C.W. De Kiewiet: History of South Africa, pp. 137 - 140.

CHAPTER III

MASONS UNDER FIRE 1899 - 1901

Masonic activity in South Africa in 1899 came virtually to a standstill as the combatants flexed their muscles. President Kruger declared martial law in the South African Republic and President M.T. Steyn of the Orange Free State, in alliance with the republic, mobilised his burghers. Many of the Uitlanders in the Transvaal left for the Cape and Natal. Bantu miners were sent away and the gold mines were closed.¹

The forces of the South African Republic and Orange Free State took the first offensive in the war, with their target the annihilation of British forces at Dundee and Ladysmith in Natal and those in Mafeking and Kimberley in the Cape Colony. Commandant General P.J. Joubert engaged the British on 20 October, 1899 at Talana near Dundee in the first pitched battle of the war. His defeat, and a further republican defeat at Elandslaagte, were not seized upon by the British who evacuated Dundee and moved to Ladysmith where they came under siege from 31 October, 1899 to 3 March, 1900.² Evidence of masonic activity at Ladysmith and in other besieged towns was published in overseas masonic journals.

The junior warden of the Klip River County Lodge at Ladysmith, Lt. A.C. McLachlan, was among the wounded troops moved to Ladysmith. It was decided to bury the lodge records, and the warrant of the lodge, its authority from the United Grand Lodge of England, was entrusted to McLachlan when the wounded were to be evacuated from Ladysmith.

"Notwithstanding the trying times the garrison were going through, several enthusiastic masons suggested they should

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1. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 324 (W.J. de Kock: The Anglo-Boer War 1899 - 1902).
 2. DSAB I, pp. 383 - 399. (G.D. Scholtz: Anglo-Boer War).

hold a meeting. The warrant of the lodge was sent on by Bro. McLachlan and the books etc. dug up on Monday, 20 November, the first meeting of the lodge was held".³ On 29 November an emergency meeting of the lodge was held at the Royal Hotel, the lodge premises having been commandeered by the military. "Here on the 31st day of the siege was initiated into masonry a gentleman, a townsman of Ladysmith, aged 55, in the presence of some 60 to 70 brethren, all of whom were either wearing the Queen's uniform or the badge of the Town Guard".⁴ During this time, the Ladysmith Lodge of Mark Master Masons, a so-called side degree, also met. The Klip River County Lodge met for the last time during the siege on 19 February, 1900 in the old Wesleyan Chapel "among what was left of the medical stores".⁵

The Boers were apparently more scrupulous than the British in preserving masonic buildings during the war. "Though the Boers looted and destroyed property of all kinds, yet more than one instance has been recorded in which buildings known to be devoted to masonic purposes have been saved from destruction and guards placed over them to prevent them being pillaged", reported The Freemason, a British publication.⁶

An instance of this was given by F.C. Lovey, Deputy Past Grand Secretary of the English lodges in Natal, who wrote to London that "four lodges in this district (Natal) were in possession of the enemy so far as we can ascertain. No damage has been done to any of the buildings".⁷ The Dundee masons had recently erected a "very handsome" masonic temple. "This building has been scrupulously respected by the Boers

3. Masonic Illustrated, January, 1901, pp. 84 - 85.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 85.

6. The Freemason, 19 December, 1900, p. 18.

7. FMH UGLE, Loose Papers Natal 1860 - 1906: DGL - London, 9 December, 1899.

although at one time some rebels attempted to loot the furniture".⁸ The only Englishman left in Dundee, a mason, became aware of the attempted looting and reported to a Boer who told his commandant. A guard was immediately placed on the building.⁹ When the town was reoccupied by British forces, a note was found in the temple reading: "Saved by Bros. J. Bell and K.O. Lange, St. Andrews Lodge, Vrijheid, Z.A.R."¹⁰

Imperial troops were guilty of at least two known cases of looting. At Ermelo they burnt the masonic temple and stole the jewels of the lodge, which were later recovered. In Springs, the jewels of the Coalfields Lodge were also stolen but again later retrieved.¹¹ Two more instances of damage were reported to the Netherlands Provincial Grand Lodge at its first meeting for three years - on 29 August, 1902, in Cape Town. The furniture and appointments of the Lodge Star of Africa at Jagersfontein were destroyed while Lodge Unie at Rietkuil was razed to the ground. No culprit was named.¹²

On the western front, the republicans besieged the British garrison at Mafeking and Kimberley from October 1899 and repelled the relieving forces of General Lord Methuen at Magersfontein in December. The arrival in South Africa of Lord Roberts as Supreme Commander in January 1900 changed the situation. With a superior force, Roberts planned to relieve Kimberley, defeat the commandos in his way and advance on Bloemfontein and later Pretoria. On 15 February, 1900, his cavalry under General John French penetrated the Boer lines around Kimberley and raised the siege which had begun in October, 1899.¹³

8. FMH UGLE, Proceedings DGL Natal 1882 - 1904: Francis's report, 28 March, 1900, p. 14.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., Francis's report, 29 September, 1900, p. 30.

11. S.A. Masonic Journal, January 1932, p. 23.

12. CA Unlisted PGL NC: Meeting, 29 August, 1902.

13. DSAB I, pp. 394 - 398. (G.D. Scholtz: Anglo-Boer War).

There was little masonic activity in Kimberley during the siege as the main temple was used as a hospital. A Kimberley mason, A.W. Adams, wrote on 9 November, 1900 to the British research lodge, Ars Quatuor Coronati Lodge: "I have been very happy, I did duty throughout the siege, but never saw a Boer. I kept my office open right through the siege, unless the 100-lb. shell was about, I then thought it good enough to shut up and go to shelter. I used sometime to think it was all bunkum, that there could not be an investing force around us, as no attempt was ever made to take the town, only a desultory and annoying discharge of guns at a long distance. I little thought there were 12,000 surrounding us."¹⁴

"Our great danger was the large area we had to guard. However, that is all over. I am glad to have had the experience: short commons did me no harm nor sleeping in the open air, although I am 60 years of age. I am not anxious to repeat the dose."¹⁵

"During the siege we practically closed up Masonry. The last meeting held was the Installation in my own Lodge on 8 October, 1899. We then adjourned sine die. One Lodge did go to Beaconsfield under dispensation and hold one or two meetings. We gave up our Temple for a hospital for fever cases, and it was so occupied until July. We are now once more in our usual routine, and I wish the country was the same".¹⁶ Within the anteroom of the Kimberley Temple is a framed photograph showing the temple being used as a hospital during those times.¹⁷ The lodges owning the building did not forget to charge the military for this benefit. An account for light, water, rates and use of a caretaker, totalling £305.1s.0d. for the 121 days from 8 March to 1 August, 1900, was sent to Major H.V. Gorle of the Imperial Government.¹⁸

14. Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge: Transactions 1901, p. 96

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Visit to Kimberley Masonic Temple by writer, September, 1982.

18. KEA Kimberley Masonic Temple Management Committee, Letter Book, 2 August, 1900 - 2 February, 1912, p. 2.

Masons were active in the military sphere. The Charles Warren Lodge, formed at Kimberley in 1879, records that among its masters were T.P.J. May, master during 1891 to 1892 and again from 1894 to 1895, who distinguished himself as an artillery officer during the siege and the Rev. John Gifford, Baptist minister during the siege.¹⁹

A history of Peace and Harmony Lodge, formed in 1873 and originally belonging to the Grand East of the Netherlands, records: "In 1899 the unhappy war between Boer and Briton and the siege of Kimberley took place. The temple was used for some period for military hospital purposes and there appear to have been no meetings of the lodge during the last months of 1899 nor until 20 June, 1900 when the first meeting was held at the Union temple, Beaconsfield. At that meeting there was manifested a diversity of opinion on the question of the war amongst some of the brethren. The then reigning master, W.Bro. J.H. Potgieter brought up the matter for discussion. The brethren decided by unanimous vote that racial feeling should be unknown in Freemasonry and stigmatised the thought of surrendering the charter through the existing circumstances, as unworthy of the brotherhood. The Master said: "I am greatly relieved by your loyalty".²⁰

Kimberley masons were more fortunate than their colleagues of Roodepoort Lodge. War stopped the building of their temple. The British military seized £500 of building materials from the site and the half-finished building was used as a cattle kraal.²¹

Mafeking, the most northerly town in the Cape Colony, came under siege in October, 1899 and was relieved in May, 1900. Under the leadership of Colonel R.S. Baden-Powell, the garrison

19. Anon.: Charles Warren Lodge, EC, Kimberley, p. 4.

20. KEA, Peace and Harmony Lodge Minute Book, 5 February, 1893 - 16 October, 1907: Meeting, 20 June, 1900; KEA, A. Rogaly: History of Peace and Harmony, 1873 - 1925, (typed MSS), p. 27.

21. J. McDowall: History Roodepoort Lodge, p. 4.

withstood enemy attacks with fortitude, their relief being greeted in Britain with an "Orgy of rejoicing".²²

Among those who suffered in Mafeking was a civilian, Edward Ross, auctioneer by trade and treasurer of the local masonic lodge. His diary recounts that, on the evening of 18 February, 1900, "we held an emergency meeting of the Masonic lodge (Austral Lodge, established 1894) and initiated A. Vickery. Probably this is unique in the era of Freemasonry, a lodge meeting held under a condition of siege, surrounded by the enemy on every side with heavy artillery pointed at us and everybody a soldier under martial law and actually during the time the lodge was working a volley of Mauser bullets fired into the town. It was proposed that the lodge have a commemoration jewel struck for those members who attended".²³

Regular lodge meetings were held at the masonic hall, while Ross reports that some of the garrison officers held a dance at the hall on 11 February and a concert was held at the hall, but the most successful event held there was an exhibition on 25 March of models, paintings, photographs and sketches by Baden-Powell. Eventually in May the much-used hall became a prison.²⁴

The only English Constitution lodge in the north to meet regularly during the war under both sides, the Rising Star at Bloemfontein, owed its continuing existence to the enthusiasm of its master, I.H. Haarburger. Attendances at meetings averaged 28.²⁵ Haarburger took a leading part in the relieving of distress of families in the town and took particular interest in the welfare of British soldiers in gaol

22. B.P. Willan (ed.): E.J. Ross, Diary of the Siege of Mafeking, October, 1899 - May, 1900, p. 1.

23. Ibid., P. 153.

24. Ibid., pp. 139, 141 - 142, 195, 227.

25. L.H. Wienand: The First 81 Years, Rising Star, Bloemfontein, p. 39.

there. In a letter to the Editor of the Masonic Research publication of The Quatuor Coronati Lodge, London, he wrote: "During the war until the British occupied Bloemfontein (13 March, 1900), Bro. John Mulligan, the chief gaoler at the Prison here, behaved most humanely to the imprisoned British soldiers, whether they were masons or not."²⁶

"The wounded British prisoners were well cared for at the Volkshospital here. The Orange Free State Government has been ever so kind to me in my capacity as Worshipful Master of the lodge and even permitted me after the Stormberg engagement to accompany the Chief Medical Officer to Bethulie per ambulance train, where we picked up 44 wounded British soldiers".²⁷ He also devoted time to "convalescents from enteric fever which is still raging in these parts".²⁸

After Bloemfontein was occupied by Roberts on 13 March, 1900, Haarburger, a German by birth, held an historic meeting on St. George's Day, 23 April, at which Lord Kitchener and others were present to rejoice in the escape from assassination of the Prince, then Grand Master and the Princess of Wales. Kitchener proposed, on behalf of Lord Roberts, the assembly send a resolution of thanks at "their providential escape".²⁹

There were 29 members and 47 visitors at the meeting, mostly military masons from all parts of the British Empire. With Kitchener sat Lord Castletown, Grand Secretary for the Irish Masonic Constitution, and other leading masons. The lodge that night initiated Mr. C.F. Hamilton of Toronto, Canada, who was a war correspondent. Apologies were received from Field Marshal Lord Roberts.³⁰

26. Quatuor Coronati Lodge: Transactions 1900, p. 189

27. Ibid., p. 190.

28. Ibid.

29. L.H. Wienand: The First 81 Years, Rising Star Bloemfontein, p. 40.

30. Ibid., p. 39

British masonic journals gave considerable publicity to the fact that Freemasonry was strongly represented among the general officers who were engaged in the war in South Africa.³¹ The Commander-in-Chief for South Africa, Field Marshal Lord Roberts was a Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England. His Chief of Staff General Lord Kitchener was Deputy Grand Master of Egypt and the Sudan. Lt. General Charles Warren was a Past Grand Deacon. Lord Metheun, Sir George White and Sir Redvers Buller were also leading masons.³²

At an earlier meeting of the Rising Star Lodge - on 5 April - letters of apology for non-attendance were read from Lord Kitchener and from Dr. A. Conan Doyle, the writer, who had been initiated into Freemasonry at Portsmouth in 1887 and had come to South Africa as Secretary and Medical Registrar of the Langman Field Hospital.³³

Conan Doyle was among the first to mention the masonic bond evident during the war. "On the word of no less an authority than Bro. Conan Doyle ... it has often transpired that, when the captors and captured in warfare had found a mutual masonic bond existed between them, then relations have been more friendly and considerate the one to the other; the wounded man, if a mason, has been more kindly treated", wrote the Masonic Illustrated.³⁴ In a lofty vein, it added: "Freemasonry is not a proselytising body but strong in its weakness. In this respect it may be said, without fear of exaggeration, to have lifted the principle of the universal brotherhood of man out of the nest of utopian theory or pious dogma into the sunshine of substantial fact and actual reality".³⁵

31. The Freemason, 23 December, 1899, p.657.

32. Ibid.

33. Masonic Illustrated, October, 1901, p. 20.

34. Masonic Illustrated, April, 1902, p. 131.

35. Ibid.

In similar vein, the Deputy Grand Secretary of the Scottish Province in the Transvaal, John H. Parker, told Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh on 18 August, 1901, that Scottish Freemasonry in his province had virtually stopped. "Members were fighting on both sides. They had met as opponents and, when the battle was over, they had come down and performed the last sad rites to brother masons whom they had known and had aided wounded Freemasons. They had in several cases been able to assist the wounded fighting on the opposite side".³⁶

Haarburger of Rising Star Lodge, Bloemfontein, relates an example of masonic co-operation between combatants. "A brother mason, a Colonel in the Canadian Regiment, was strolling one Sunday morning at Modder River when he was confronted by a man who aimed a rifle at him. Unthinkingly he made a masonic sign when the man, also a mason, threw his rifle to the ground and told him he was a member of Lodge De Broederband, Pretoria, and belonged to General Cronje's staff. They shook hands and the colonel was implored to return to his camp immediately".³⁷

Haarburger, a remarkable man and mason, put his principles into practice. A meeting of his lodge on 31 January, 1901, to mourn the passing of Queen Victoria, was attended by visitors from Irish, Scottish, Netherlandic and other English lodges. Among them were many Boer "brothers" and even several Boer prisoners "on parole". Confirmation for this came from P.S. Blignaut, a member of the Rising Star and a former minister of the Orange Free State Republic and a brother-in-law of ex-President Steyn.³⁸

36. Masonic Illustrated, September, 1901, p. 259.

37. Quatuor Coronati Lodge: Transactions 1900, p. 189

38. Quatuor Coronati Lodge: Transactions 1901, pp. 95 - 96.

After Bloemfontein was occupied on 13 March, 1900, Roberts consolidated and was ready in May to march on Pretoria which he entered on 5 June. But holding the capitals of both Republics did not mean the end of the war. It was a time for the commandos, Louis Botha leading those in the Eastern Transvaal, J.H. de la Rey those in the Western Transvaal and C.R. de Wet those in the Orange Free State. Roberts attempted to occupy all the two Republics but was harassed by the tactics of the commandos who would strike isolated British columns and disappear before reinforcements could arrive.³⁹ De Wet excelled in this type of warfare, which led eventually to the British adopting a strategy known as "scorched earth" - a systematic fencing of the land simultaneously with the destruction of enemy property and the despatch of women and children to concentration camps. But the commandos found ways to keep operating. The war spread in 1901 to various parts of the Cape Colony. At the start of 1902, Kitchener organised large raids in the Free State to capture De Wet who always managed to escape.⁴⁰

De Wet's ability to escape time and again from British raids prompted this letter from a serving soldier, a mason, to a British publication: "There is a humorous feature of masonry in times of war. Tommy is getting more convinced every day that De Wet is a Freemason. The general opinion of Mr. Atkins is that he will never be caught, as both Lords Roberts and Kitchener are masons, and for this reason have decided to let him alone. As a matter of fact, Freemasonry does not flourish among the Boers as a class. The Dutch Reformed Church is opposed to the Craft, and there are only very few Dutch farmers who belong to our Society, and of course, De Wet is not one of them", he added.⁴¹

Since the Boer capitulation at Slaapkraans on 30 July, 1900,

39. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 339 - 343. (W.J. de Kock: Anglo-Boer War, 1899 - 1902).

40. Ibid., pp. 345 - 347.

41. Quatuor Coronati Lodge: Transactions 1901, p. 96.

when Marthinus Prinsloo with more than 3000 men surrendered, the number of exiled Boer prisoners of war was steadily increasing. In all 14 overseas prisoner-of-war camps were established in St. Helena and Ceylon, to house the 26,600 sent there.⁴²

Among the prisoners sent to St. Helena were members of the Netherlandic lodges in South Africa who found their masonic ties were to prove useful. One of these prisoners-of-war wrote to the Masonic Illustrated in July 1901: "Existence here on St. Helena is exceedingly dull, and a few of us are indebted to the local lodges for being enabled to spend a few pleasant evenings in town at the lodge meetings. There are two lodges in St. Helena, viz. the St. Helena Lodge, No. 488, and the Old Rock Lodge, No. 912 (both working under the English Constitution) of which Bro. G. Finch and W.Bro.W. Harrison are the Worshipful Masters for the present year, and whatever our political differences are, we have had no reason to complain of our fellow Craftsmen in St. Helena, who have in a most generous way extended to many of us the right hand of fellowship and welcome."⁴³

"A few of us have been allowed parole, through the courtesy of Bro. Lieut.-Col. A.L. Paget, our esteemed Camp-Commandant, to accept invitations to attend the lodge meetings, and there our welcome has been all that could be desired.

"We meet on a common base - English officers, rank and file soldiers, St. Helena merchants, and prisoners-of-war fraternising in such a fashion as to make it difficult to realise that we have been, and are still, to some extent, so far apart in our secular relations in the world beyond the lodge room; and when release does come, our recollections of

42. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 341. (W.J. de Kock: Anglo-Boer War, 1899 - 1902).

43. Masonic Illustrated, July 1901, pp. 203 - 204.

The Masonic Boer Prisoners at St. Helena.



During the second War of Independence (1899 - 1902) many Boer prisoners-of-war were sent to camps at St. Helena and Ceylon. This photograph shows a group at St. Helena, who, as Freemasons, were allowed to go to the local lodge.

Masonic Illustrated, July, 1901.

masonic ties in St. Helena will be carried from this island, and will have a better influence in healing the sore places than all the sophistry of statesmen and legislators".⁴⁴

A British officer, a mason, who was aboard one of the vessels carrying captured Boers to St. Helena, recounts that "our army Quarter Master Captain was a fine officer but very strict. I was somewhat surprised therefore to see one of the Boers coming from his room with a bundle of something that appeared to be eatables".⁴⁵

The same incident took place the next few nights. His curiosity was aroused. In a hitherto unused stateroom he found "this same old Boer lying comfortably on the berth". He was told by his steward that the Boer was there by order of the quartermaster and he was to receive meals from the officers' mess. "This was too much for my British spirit; that an old Boer who had been fighting us should receive such courtesies and especially as he was only a private". The British officer sought out the quartermaster who took him back to the stateroom and said: "Brother Boer, this is Brother So-and-so, a good Brother mason who will see you are kept comfortable".⁴⁶ Apparently he did, his animosity forgotten in his dealings with a fellow mason.

Among the thousands who left the Transvaal to stream down to the Cape and Natal were many masons who arrived destitute and sought aid which was soon forthcoming. The District Grand Lodge of Natal told Grand Lodge it had had "to meet extreme pressure in consequence of the influx of refugees who were driven from their homes prior to the commencement of hostilities and this pressure has now become accentuated

44. Masonic Illustrated, July 1901, p. 204.

45. The Cape Argus, 12 November, 1901: Columnist "Level" quoting Texas Freemason.

46. Ibid.

by the further arrival of hundreds of others who have since come into the Colony in a state of destitution via Delgoa Bay.. Local funds are exhausted. As Johannesburg is now in the hands of British troops the refugees are all naturally anxious to make an early return to their homes".⁴⁷

The erring District Grand Master of the Transvaal, Roberts, in Britain during the war, was on hand to advise the Grand Lodge on the situation. In a letter to The Freemason he wrote that of the 1200 English masons in the Transvaal in 1899, he estimated "four-fifths were of English and the remaining fifth of Dutch nationality".⁴⁸

"These English four-fifths had found themselves under the necessity of abandoning their homes and household goods and seeking refuge in the Cape Colony or Natal", added The Freemason. These refugees who had earned "comfortable incomes", from £400 and in some cases up to £1000 a year, now found themselves homeless and penniless, it wrote, urging English masons' support for the appeal launched by Richards to raise funds for those "driven" from their homes by the Boers.⁴⁹

Richards gave a personal donation of 100 guineas to the fund he had started. It had increased to £500 by March 1900 when the Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, asked Grand Lodge to raise a fund to help English masons in South Africa.⁵⁰ At the Grand Lodge meeting Richards agreed his fund should be merged with the general fund to which the Grand Lodge donated 1000 guineas which the Board of General Purposes

47. FMH UGLE, File Loose Papers Natal: DGL - Grand Secretary, 1 June, 1900.

48. The Freemason, 9 December, 1899: Richards' letter to Editor, p. 626.

49. Ibid., 16 December, 1899, p. 635.

50. FMH UGLE Meetings: 7 March, 1900, p. 411.

recommended "to relieve the distress of their loyal members occasioned directly by the war in that quarter".⁵¹ The word "loyal" however was queried at the meeting and the Grand Registrar, John Strathan, Q.C. explained that aid would only go to a subscribing English Freemason "who has remained loyal to the British Crown".⁵² This upset Richards who replied that there were Dutchmen who were not subjects of the Queen but who were as loyal to the Empire and the State as himself. "When we are at war we are not at war with them all. There are Dutchmen fighting on our side against oppression."⁵³

The fund reached a total of £18 938, with the major contributions coming from England. From it the Transvaal Division received £7 000, the Eastern Division £2 300, Central £2 200, Natal £2 825 and the Western £2 613. Amounts of £10 for an individual and £20 for a family were granted.⁵⁴ In the Cape 41,064 were assisted by the fund. Balances not used for refugees were later distributed for educational and benevolent purposes.⁵⁵

The Dutch Freemasons turned to the help of their kinfolk. The Dutch Grand East of the Netherlands sent 2000 guilders in 1899 for the relief of distressed Dutch masons as a result of the war, and a further 8300 guilders in 1901, while other Dutch lodges were asked to contribute. These funds were to be used for relief for lodge members and their families in the Republic of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic.⁵⁶

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51. FMH UGLE Meeting: 7 March, 1900, pp. 412 - 413.
 52. Ibid., p. 413.
 53. Ibid., p. 416.
 54. DGL ED EC, Reports: Meeting, 12 September, 1900, S.A. Masonic Relief Fund - Egan, 2 August, 1900, p. 29; The Freemason, 8 November, 1900, p. 484.
 55. FMH UGLE SA Western Division, Punjab 1860 - 1906 Files: Masonic Relief Fund for Boer War Victims, Final Report, 19 May, 1904.
 56. GEN Bulletin 1899: Hoofdbestuur - Deputy Grand Master Lewis, 27 July, 1899; GEN Bulletin 1901: Hoofdbestuur Lewis, 16 June, 1901.

It was little enough. Mr. H. Tiffany, the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge Secretary in South Africa, told The Netherlands:

"Applications already received (for aid) have been so numerous that we have not been able to entertain them all and the strain has been very great upon us and the increased cost of living has narrowed our incomes with the result that many Brethren find it impossible to continue any more assistance."⁵⁷

"It is understood that in England over £10,000 has been collected in the lodges for the relief of Brethren of the English Constitution out here, but unfortunately none of this money is to be devoted to the Scottish, Irish or Dutch Freemasonry so that, if a helping hand is not extended, many of our brethren will be in dire distress."⁵⁸

"Again the lodges in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal have suspended working since September, 1899 and there is no communication with them."⁵⁹

The Board of Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge officers reported to the lodge's annual meeting in Cape Town in August 1900 that applications for relief from distressed Boer Prisoners-of-war and refugees had been received in 1899 and had to be met from its own benevolent fund. But only £50 could be disbursed, and thus overseas help was more than essential. The meeting was also informed by the Board that "lodges in the Transvaal, together with Lodges Unity and De Ster in het Oosten in the Orange River Colony, are still cut off from communication with Cape Town".⁶⁰

By 1901 Deputy Grand Master Lewis had received a total of

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57. GEN Bulletin 1901: Tiffany - Grand Secretary, 20 May 1901
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid.
60. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 31 August, 1900: Report of Board, pp. 3 - 5.

£905.9s.8d. from The Hague and had circularised all Dutch lodges, asking for names of masons requiring aid. He emphasised: "The money should be devoted to members outside this (Cape) Colony or at least in areas which have been the scene of active hostilities. Within these limitations the fund will of course be administered without respect to political or social considerations".⁶¹

TRAITORS

The masonic injunction that no mason shall discuss political or religious affairs in a lodge seemed to have been ignored by local masonic leaders.

At the outbreak of war the District Grand Master of the English Eastern Division, Dr. C.J. Egan, asked London for advice. "I fear that there are many cases where Brethren belonging to lodges in frontier districts have conspired with the Boers and will be tried for high treason. Can these brethren be expelled from their lodges? I anticipate trouble if they remain in their lodges".⁶²

In September 1900 Egan told his District Grand Lodge: "From what I have heard certain Brethren have so far forgotten their masonic principles as to have joined the Boers and taken up arms against their lawful sovereign. Such members cannot be again admitted to the lodge but will have to suffer the penalty of exclusion from the Craft".⁶³ He disclosed that London had written him: "In that felonious act which is called High Treason, the offending Brethren not only breaks the law of the land but is false to the ancient charges of masonry and it is not only

61. CA Unlisted PGL NC, Meeting, 11 April, 1902: Lewis's circular, 9 December, 1901, p. 10.

62. FMH UGLE ED Correspondence: Egan - Grand Secretary, 1 August, 1900.

63. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 12 September, 1900, Egan's address, p. 9.

within the right but it becomes the duty of the Grand or District Grand Lodge to cut him off entirely from the Fraternity".⁶⁴

Egan was never to use this right although he told his District Grand Lodge in September, 1902: "During the past year one lodge has written to me concerning treasonable conduct by some of its members, one or more having been found guilty of the crime and condemned to certain penalties by properly constituted courts".⁶⁵ He had asked the lodge for full details but had heard nothing from it, nor did he disclose the name of the lodge.⁶⁶

No record can be found of any English Constitution mason being expelled from his lodge in South Africa on conviction of high treason.

In Cape Town the District Grand Master of the Western Division English Constitution, the Rt. Rev. C. Barnett-Clarke, Dean of Cape Town, declared: "Many have dared to do and to die rather than be traitors to the Realm and Throne and Paramountcy of the worldwide British Dominion".⁶⁷

"We cannot forget those who have not behaved as men and masons should", Deputy District Grand Master C. Aburrow told his Transvaal District Grand Lodge when it resumed meetings on 1 February, 1901.⁶⁸ However his colleague in Kimberley,

64. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 12 September, 1900; Egan's address, p. 10.

65. DGL ED EC Reports_ Meeting, 10 September, 1902, Egan's address, p. 9.

66. Ibid.

67. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 20 March, 1900, Barnett-Clark's address, p. 6.

68. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1915: Meeting, 1 February, 1901.

the Deputy District Grand Master of the Central Division, D.J. Haarhoff, was more forgiving: "All our members appear to have been true to their government and the Craft", he said, but did not add which government.⁶⁹

Every mason takes an obligation that he will not stir up dissent against the established government of the country in which he resides, a difficult promise to keep in times of war.⁷⁰

PEACE

In January, 1902, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Dr. A. Kuyper, a friend of the Boers, offered to act as mediator to bring peace. Copies of his correspondence were sent to Lord Kitchener who sent a copy to the Transvaal leaders. They asked for permission to send it to President Steyn of the Free State. Finally peace negotiations began in Vereeniging in May. Faced with the alternatives of a conditional peace or unconditional surrender, the Republican governments signed the Treaty of Vereeniging on 31 May, 1902. The main condition was that the two republics would become British colonies, subject to certain conditions. The British supervised the laying down of arms by the commandoes, and by the end of 1902 most of the surviving women and children had left the concentration camps and most of the Boer prisoners-of-war had returned from overseas.

69. KEA DGL CD ED, Minute Book, 22 January, 1896 - 24 September, 1913: Meeting, 26 March, 1902.

70. Masonic Ritual.

It had been a costly war for Britain - some £191 million and 97,477 casualties including 7091 killed. The Boers had lost 3990 killed, 1081 died of disease or accident in the field and many died in concentration camps. W.J. de Kock gives the total loss of life in the camps, including male deaths, at 27, 927, of whom 4,117 were adult women and 20,074 were children under sixteen.⁷¹

The war also brought world-wide condemnation of Britain for its establishment of concentration camps, and, with this criticism, further attempts by European Freemasons to persuade the United Grand Lodge of England to bring pressure on the British Government to end the war, as the next chapter records.

71. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 315, 354 - 357 (W.J. de Kock: The Anglo-Boer War 1899 - 1902).

CHAPTER IV

INTERNATIONAL MASONIC RELATIONS DURING THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE OF 1880 - 1881 AND 1899 - 1902

The Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland and the Grand East of the Netherlands shared common authority in masonic matters in South Africa and Rhodesia until the formation of the local Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in 1961 which absorbed the majority of the Dutch lodges.

Recognised by the Grand Lodge of England in 1731, the Grand East of the Netherlands was the first to exercise jurisdiction in South Africa with the formation of the Dutch Lodge De Goede Hoop in 1772. The English Grand Lodge assumed authority in this country with the formation of British Lodge in 1812, the Scottish followed in 1860 and the Irish in 1896. This situation where four grand lodges ruled in the same country was unique in the masonic world. Their respective lodges, practising in relative harmony with each other for many years, clung to their mother grand lodges despite the early difficulties of communication and the often embarrassing decisions made overseas.

To facilitate interconstitutional working, the United Grand Lodge of England, recognised as the superior body, encouraged foreign constitutions to elect representatives to sit in its Grand Lodge. This system came under stress at the outbreak of the Transvaal War of Independence 1880 - 1881. A dispute over the events of this war arose between the Grand Lodges themselves and reflected the political feelings of the time both in South Africa and Europe.

Representatives of some of the Dutch lodges in South Africa - Harmony at Richmond, Caledonia at Smithfield, Unie at Bloemfontein and De Goede Trouw at Cape Town - attended a special meeting of the Grand East at The Hague on

13 February, 1881, to ask for its support in bringing peace to the Transvaal and a return to independence for the South African Republic.¹ Following that meeting, the Deputy Grand Master National, J.J.F. Noordsiek, as a matter of urgency, wrote to the Dutch representative on the United Grand Lodge of England, Lord Skelmersdale, later the Earl of Lathom, asking him to submit a resolution approved at that special meeting of the Grand East and ratified by the National Grand Master, Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, to England.² The resolution read:

"The Grand East of the Netherlands to The United Grand Lodge of England. Most Worshipful Grand Master and Brethren, The Grand East of the Netherlands begs, specially convened today for this purpose, to offer to your United Grand Lodge the following address:

"The English Government has thought proper to establish its authority in the Transvaal, a country occupied for a large portion by descendants of Dutch forefathers, and consequently by a people closely allied to the Netherlands nation.

"The Boers settled with all they possessed in those regions, formerly uninhabited and barren, in order to live there under laws of their own framing and of the fruits of their own labour.

"But as it has now been proved that its inhabitants are opposed to the annexation of their State by England and they have even taken up arms in order to regain their national independence and, above all, that it is their ardent wish to be once more a free Republic, we deem it our bounden duty

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1. CA Unlisted Harmony Letter Book, 1868 - 1882: Secretary Haarhof - Noordsiek, 13 April, 1881; Vergadering van het Buitengewoon Groot Oosten der Nederlanden in 1881, 13 February, 1881.
 2. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question 1881: Noordsiek - Skelmersdale with resolution 19 February, 1881; Bulletin van het Groot Oosten der Nederlanden, 1879 - 1881, p. 187: Noordsiek - Skelmersdale, 19 February, 1881.

to raise our voices on their behalf, the more as there are among them so great a number of Brethren Freemasons, who, under the jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands, work peaceably and in brotherly communion with Lodges placed under your United Grand Lodge.

"In the name of humanity we appeal to you, not only on behalf of our Brethren, but of the whole people of the Transvaal, who are mostly by descent of our own flesh and blood.

"We are convinced that your United Grand Lodge, like our Grand East, cannot but sympathise with a people that has been deprived of their liberty and independence, and struggles for justice and the restoration of invaded rights.

"It is on these considerations that we cherish the hope, that it may please your United Grand Lodge to use its influence in favour of the reestablishment of the Transvaal Republic.

"May this our appeal be favourably received by your United Grand Lodge in order that, by the mediation and cooperation of our English Brethren, the rights and privileges of our Brethren and kinsmen in the Transvaal may be restored, and that once more they may enjoy under a free Government the fruits of their labour. No doubt your influence, guided by the Masonic spirit, will greatly assist in bringing about the desired result".³

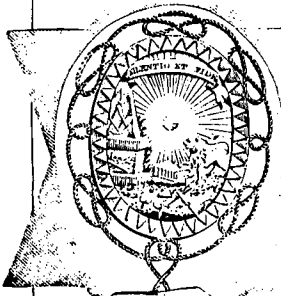
It was signed at The Hague on 13 February, 1881, by Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, National Grand Master.⁴

Every candidate to regular Freemasonry agrees to accept the injunction that masons are not to discuss questions of a social, political or religious nature at meetings.⁵

3. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question 1881: Resolution GEN - UGLE 13 February, 1881 from Prince Frederick of Netherlands.

4. Ibid.

5. Masonic Ritual.



The Grand East of the Netherlands The United Grand Lodge of England.

Most Worshipful Grand Master and W.B.!

The Grand East of the Netherlands begs, specially convened to day for this purpose, to offer to your United Grand Lodge the following address.

The English Government has thought proper to establish its authority in the Transvaal, a country occupied for a large portion by descendants of Dutch forefathers, and consequently by a people closely allied to the Netherlands nation.

The Boers settled with all they possessed in those regions, formerly uninhabited and barren, in order to live there under laws of their own framing and of the fruits of their own labour.

But as it has now been proved that its inhabitants are opposed to the annexation of their State by England, and they have even taken up arms, in order to regain their national independence, and above all, that it is their ardent wish to be once more a free Republic, we deem it our bounden duty to raise our voices on their behalf, the more as there are among them so great a number of Brethren Freemasons, who under the jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands, work peaceably and in brotherly communion with Lodges placed under your United Grand Lodge.

In

The Grand East of the Netherlands, the ruling body for Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa until 1961, made several attempts during the two Wars of Independence in South Africa (1880 - 1881, 1899-1902) to persuade the United Grand Lodge of England to intervene with the British Government on behalf of the people of the South African Republic (Transvaal). Above is reproduced part of an address from the Netherlands to England dated 13 February, 1881.

Therefore Skelmersdale felt that the Grand East had gone against this "fundamental principle", as he put it, in asking England to interfere in the political question of the status of the South African Republic (Transvaal). He wrote that while he was always ready, as the Netherlands representative at the English Grand Lodge, to put forward its views "in accordance with such law, I am entirely precluded from complying with the desires of your Grand Lodge".⁶ The Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, agreed with him, he added. As Deputy Grand Master of England (1874 - 1891) Skelmersdale could not allow any deviation from the 'no politics' rule.⁷

But the resolution was not political, asserted Noordsiek in his reply to Skelmersdale: "We spoke in the name of humanity and right, both masonic principles which no one Freemason can deny ... we did not attempt, in the slightest manner to treat a question of state; only the masonic spirit presented at those deliberations which produced the resolution.

"The intention was in truth no other than to do, in the name of humanity, an appeal to the Grand Lodge of England on behalf of the inhabitants of the Transvaal and to express the wish that it may please her to sympathise with the people of that country".⁸ Therefore he asked Lathom again to put the resolution to the English Grand Lodge.

Again Lord Lathom refused but revealed, as Grand Master in the chair, that he had made a full report on 2 March that year to Grand Lodge: "that I received the resolution and had been

6. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question 1881: Lathom - Noordsiek, 26 February, 1881.

7. Ibid.

8. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question 1881: Noordsiek - Lathom, 9 March, 1881; Bulletin van het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1879 - 1881, pp. 189 - 191: Noordsiek - Lathom, 9 March, 1881

compelled to decline to present it for the reason already given by me. The Brethren present, numbering several hundreds, received my statement with much applause and testified most unmistakeably their entire concurrence with the course I had felt called to adopt".⁹

Noordsiek was not satisfied and pointed out that a representative of a masonic power was not allowed to withhold a resolution from that power to the Grand Lodge, whatever its content, and asked for the resolution to be returned, warning Lathom his conduct would be reported to the Grand East.¹⁰

Understandably, Lathom resigned as the Netherlands representative and returned the resolution.¹¹ That piece of paper soon crossed the Channel back to England, sent this time direct to the Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, via the diplomatic representative of Holland in London.

Noordsiek wrote to the Prince of Wales on 6 April, 1881: "The Grand East of the Netherlands, assembled in a special meeting on 13 February last, under presidency of His Royal Highness Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, resolved to make an appeal to the Grand Lodge of England, in order to obtain from their English Brethren their fraternal influence in behalf of the Transvaal Boers."¹²

"That resolution was forwarded to the Right Worshipful Brother the Earl of Lathom, representative of the Dutch Freemasons, but his Lordship was not inclined to submit it to the cognizance of the Grand Lodge of England, being of the opinion

9. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1879 - 1881, pp. 191 - 192: Lathom - Noordsiek, 21 March, 1881; FMH UGLE: Quarterly Communication, 21 March, 1881, pp. 156 - 157.

10. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question, 1881: Noordsiek - Lathom, 28 March, 1881.

11. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1879 - 1881, p. 194: Lathom - Noordsiek, 12 April, 1881.

12. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question, 1881: Noordsiek - Prince of Wales, 6 April, 1881; Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1879 - 1881, pp. 195 - 196: Noordsiek - Prince of Wales, 6 April, 1881.

that the Masonic Laws and Charges did not allow him to do so.

"However it be, we are, on the contrary, truly convinced, that his Lordship totally misunderstood the true sense of the resolution. Far from any wish or intention to ask your Grand Lodge's intervention in a political question, we only had in view to desire the maintenance of the masonic duty of promoting peace, truth and humanity.

"Your Royal Highness may be assured that His Royal Highness Prince Frederick of the Netherlands would never have subscribed a resolution contrary to the Laws and Charges of Masonry, which He himself made his task to uphold and to defend during the 65 years of His Grand Mastership.

"We cherish the hope that your Royal Highness will grant a favourable attention to our demand, and will bring the resolution, which we join hereto, to the knowledge of your Grand Lodge, in order that we may obtain an answer from that Supreme Masonic Power".¹³

The Prince of Wales would not be drawn. A reply from his Grand Secretary, Col. Shadwell St. Clerke, on behalf of the Prince, pointed out that the Grand Master approved of Lord Lathom's refusal to submit the contentious resolution on behalf of the Boers in the Transvaal to his Grand Lodge, and, on his part, would not do so.¹⁴

Despite the royal rebuff, the Grand East asked England to submit nominations for a successor to Lathom but the split

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13. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question 1881: Noordsiek - Prince of Wales, 6 April, 1881; Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1879 - 1881, pp. 195 - 196: Noordsiek - Prince of Wales, 6 April, 1881.
 14. FMH UGLE, Transvaal question 1881: Grand Secretary - Noordsiek, 26 April, 1881; Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1879 - 1881: Grand Secretary - Noordsiek, 26 April, 1881, pp. 196 - 197.

had widened and the Grand Secretary declared: "His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Grand Master himself feels precluded at the present time from submitting names of English Brethren for the appointment in question".¹⁵

Following this letter, the Grand East of the Netherlands broke off relations with England in 1881.¹⁶ Tentative approaches were made by the Netherlands to England for names of representatives on Grand Lodge but were unsuccessful until August, 1885 when another attempt was made.¹⁷

Eventually the Grand Secretary, Col. Shadwell St. Clerke, replied, pointing out the Grand Master would be willing to put forward nominations on condition that the Netherlands representative would never be asked to "exercise his duties" in regard to religious or political matters.¹⁸ This reference to the Grand East's plea for help in the Transvaal War of 1880 - 1881 and the request that in future its representative should not bring up religious or political matters, led the Grand East to reply somewhat sadly that it did not agree to these special conditions governing its control of its representative. It reiterated that it had not deviated from the principles of the Order.¹⁹ But England relented and the next year sent a delegation to The Hague and friendly relations were restored.²⁰

This news was communicated joyfully to the Dutch masons in South Africa, but apparently this break had not interfered with relations between the two constitutions, with masons visiting each others' lodges amicably, except where war

15. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1881 - 1883: Grand Secretary - Noordsiek, 21 November, 1881, p. 81.

16. Ibid., Noordsiek - Grand Secretary, 21 December, 1881, p.105.

17. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1883 - 1885: P.J. Van Diggelen - UGLE, 4 August, 1885, p.5.

18. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1887: Grand Secretary, England - Grand Secretary, Netherlands, 10 January, 1887, pp. 21 - 24.

19. Ibid., Grand Secretary, Netherlands - Grand Secretary, England, 18 March, 1887, pp. 24 - 25.

20. CAA2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1888, Dieperink's Report.

conditions prevented this.²¹

The Netherlands Grand Master National, Prince Willem Frederick Karel, died on 8 September, 1881 after 65 years' masonic service. He was replaced by Prince Alexander, who indicated in his installation address that discussions of social, religious and political questions should be permitted in lodges. His remarks caused a furore in South Africa, still in a disturbed state after the events of 1881. The Provincial Grand Lodge of the Netherlands in South Africa protested strongly about them, a senior mason, M.L. Klisser, telling the annual meeting in Cape Town on 31 August, 1882 that discord would prevail if social, religious or political discussions were allowed in any lodge.²²

While masons living in South Africa at that time felt strongly about introducing politics into their lodges, their Supreme Powers obviously felt no compunction.

The Grand East of the Netherlands was apparently determined to ensure that political events occurring later in South Africa should not pass unnoticed by the English Grand Master, despite the embarrassment of 1881.

On approaches from some South African lodges, the Dutch Grand Master, G. van Visser circularised other Grand Lodges in Europe on 31 August, 1899, near the outbreak of the Second War of Independence, seeking "their help and interference in the interest of the South African Republic."²³ Before deciding on an important question, "the Board of Grand Officers wishes to have your advice regarding the consequences that such a measure might bear in several aspects. The relations

21. CA A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1888, Dieperink's Report.

22. CA A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1882, Klisser's Report.

23. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1899: Visser - Grand Lodges, 31 August, 1899, p. 13.

between the Lodges working under English and Dutch constitutions in South Africa are yet of the most excellent kind and the Board should like to know if there were even the least fear that this precious state of affairs could be altered by taking a step as is requested".²⁴

A copy sent to the Dutch Deputy Grand Master in South Africa, Charles E. Lewis, resident in Cape Town, elicited this careful reply on 30 September, 1899:

"I feel very deeply the responsibility of giving advice in this matter, but I have already considered the question in as much as a similar suggestion was recently referred to me officially from Lodge De Broederband; and the substance of my reply to the Lodge will exactly indicate my view of the matter- viz. that, however much one may feel that, on abstract grounds, our efforts as Freemasons should be zealously employed in the cause of peace, one feels that in this case the sympathies of the Brethren on the particular matters at issue are very much divided and the feeling in many cases run high. One has therefore to fear that a petition for peace would be taken up with anything like unanimity even by the Lodges under the Netherlands constitution in South Africa; that an effort to get petitions with this object accepted by the Lodges under the Netherlands constitution in South Africa would create differences and disunion even among our own lodges and would undoubtedly strain the relations with sister constitutions; while the probability of such petitions having any practical effect upon the very serious issues that are at stake is almost negligible in comparison with the harm that the attempt will undoubtedly work within our own section of the masonic fraternity".²⁵

24. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1899: Visser - Grand Lodges, 31 August, 1899, p.13.

25. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1900: Lewis - Visser, 30 September, 1899, p. 15.

"On these grounds therefore my advice - which is given at the same time with the utmost desire for a pacific and stable settlement being reached - is strongly against the attempt to organise any such masonic appeal for peace as is apparently contemplated by the Lodges and Brethren who have approached the Board of Grand Officers of the Grand East of the Netherlands in this matter".²⁶

Persistent to the last, the Dutch Board of Grand Officers on 17 June, 1900 passed a resolution hopefully declaring that peace would soon return to South Africa and expressed its sympathy to the Netherlandic lodges in South Africa.²⁷

The war disturbed other European grand lodges. On 17 December, 1901 La Grande Loge de Suisse Alpina, encouraged by the Grand Lodge of France, appealed to the Grand Lodge of England for its intercession in regard to the concentration camps set up by the British during the war. It wrote: (translated from French): "Grand Master, Swiss masonry has always had a deep and great sympathy for English masonry and for all the greatness and goodness which the latter has accomplished up to this day from a humanistic point of view.

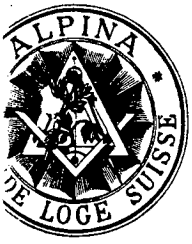
"Relying on this sympathy and benevolence that we have always witnessed at the Grand Lodge of England, we take the liberty to address you these lines.

"We know the noble and elevated aspirations of our English Brethren who know better than anyone the sacred obligations that Freemasonry imposes on its adepts.

"The opinion of Swiss Freemasons was stirred after reading English newspapers and reports by your compatriots about what

26. Bulletin Van Het Groot Oosten Der Nederlanden 1900: Lewis - Visser, 30 September, 1899, p. 15.

27. Ibid., Board of General Purposes - Lewis, 17 June, 1900, p.20; CA A 2263 Vol.16, PGL NC, Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1900, p.4, Board's Report.



Ch. de Neuchâtel, le 17 Décembre 1901

Honorable Directeur
Le Grand Secrétaire

de la Grande Loge Suisse Alpina

la Grande Loge d'Angleterre

Londres

Très Respectueux Maître,

TT. CC. & BB. AA. FF.,

De tout temps la Maçonnerie suisse a éprouvé une profonde & grande sympathie pour la Maçonnerie anglaise et pour tout ce que cette dernière a accompli de grand & de bien jusqu'à ce jour au point de vue humanitaire ; c'est nous basant sur cette sympathie et sur la bienveillance que nous a toujours témoignée la Grande Loge d'Angleterre que nous prenons la liberté de vous adresser ces lignes.

Nous connaissons les aspirations nobles et élevées de nos FF. d'Angleterre qui savent mieux que personne les devoirs sacrés que la Maçonnerie impose à ses adeptes. Ils vertue même des principes qui sont à la base de notre Alliance. L'opinion des Frères-maçons suisses s'est émue à la lecture des journaux anglais et des rapports de nos compatriotes sur ce qui se passe actuellement au sud de l'Afrique, en ce qui concerne la mortalité

La Grande Loge Suisse Alpina wrote to the United Grand Lodge of England on 17 December, 1901, expressing its sorrow at conditions in the South African concentration camps and urging England to make representations to the Government about them. Reproduced is the first page of the memorandum to England from Switzerland.

is actually happening in the South of Africa, concerning the frightening mortality of children in concentration camps.

"For the first time, the administrative council of Alpina makes an appeal to the Grand Lodge of England asking it to use its influence to bring a solution to the South African war. This council had not wanted to intervene, so as not to be accused of meddling in a political question.

"Today, at the demand of the majority of the Alpina lodges, and for the deep sentiment of pity felt for the wretched, locked-up people in the concentration camps, the administrative council of the Grand Swiss Lodge of Alpina raises its voice in favour of justice and humanity by making a pressing appeal to the Brethren of England.

"We are persuaded that these Brethren have already, and will still use all their influence to persuade the authorities to bring serious modifications to the concentration camps and procedures of the actual war. That would calm the conscience of all the friends of England.

"With respect to all that the country has done from the point of view of civilization, we suffer deeply to note that these noble and generous traditions have not been continued, also that war measures which are no longer of our epoch are being used, and that, men, particularly masons, friends of justice and humanity, must energetically reprobate.

"English masonry will certainly not remain deaf to an appeal of justice and pity for the unhappy and innocent victims of the war. We hope that the pressure exerted on public opinion, will elucidate the latter and that an end will be put to this excess that we have indicated.

"We take advantage of this occasion, Grand Master, to renew our cordial affection as well as our most fraternal and devout

sentiments. In the name of the Administrative Council of Alpina. The Grand Secretary".²⁸

The missive brought a lengthy reply in January the next year from the Grand Secretary of England, E. Letchworth. It read (translated from French): "I am charged by the Grand Master to express to you regret that His Royal Highness feels due to the inevitable circumstances that did not permit an answer sooner to your letter that was motivated by the unhappy war in South Africa.

"His Royal Highness who has followed with the utmost interest, as well as with the greatest anxiety, all the incidents of this war, learns with a deep regret that his Swiss brothers have added substance to alleged accounts that are stained with inexactitude and seem to come from malevolent sources.

"Your letter of 13 December, 1901, states as authenticated fact the view that England, during the South African war, deviates from the noble and generous traditions by adopting 'war measures that are no longer of our epoch, and that men, particularly masons, friends of justice and humanity, must reprobate energetically'.

"The mortality in the concentration camps constitutes the only given fact put forward in the letter which supports this serious accusation.

"Nonetheless, it is evident that those whose ideas you represent make a serious mistake regarding the origin of these camps when they attribute their formation to deliberate, inhuman political views. The Swiss masonic lodges ignore the fact that these concentration camps, since their origin, were established and maintained only in the interest of humanity and with the aim of subtracting from the hunger and deaths of the wives and children of those who are up in arms

28. FMH UGLE, Miscellaneous Papers, Transvaal 1881 - 1910: Grande Loge Suisse Alpina - UGLE, 17 December, 1901.

against us.

"England has, in that way, deviated, it is true, from the traditions of European warfare, traditions which would relieve the general of an army of any responsibility towards the families of the soldiers which fought against him, the wives and children of a population participating in a guerilla war in this case.

"A general or a government has never until now accepted the responsibility of providing for the families of an enemy. There is no instance of the same food, shelter and protection being given to the troops and the enemy's wives and children.

"On the contrary, the custom has been to take away or destroy all the provisions and to give the gangs of guerillas the alternatives of either letting their wives and children starve to death or to surrender.

"England, moving away from past traditions, merits perhaps to be blamed by the soldiers who are in favour of these rigorous measures, but England's action does not constitute a precedent which is of such a nature as to provoke the enmity of the 'friends of justice and humanity'.

"If one goes back to the period, a little over a year ago, of the South African war, one will remember that all the railway lines of the country and of the principal towns including the capitals of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, were in the hands of the English.

"The Boer forces were divided into small gangs dispersed all over the country. The combatting technique adopted by these gangs was that which is generally known under the name of guerilla warfare. Each farm served as a depot for the enemy, permitting them to concentrate at will, and to supply the commandos with provisions and ammunition.

"This advantage together with the perfect knowledge the Boers had of the countryside and the size of the theatre of this war, made the capture of these gangs of guerillas and the ending of this battle very difficult for the English.

"It was noted that to end the war one would have to restrain, in an effective and progressive manner, the area of country open to these gangs and to force them, in this way, to accept combat with the English columns.

"The execution of this plan necessitated the removal or destruction of supplies from certain areas of the country and one had to adopt a system of lines and blockhouses to prevent the enemy from once again occupying these plundered districts. If the English had taken the supplies from the farms whilst leaving the women and children live as best they could, they would not have gone beyond the rights of war.

"Even if the civil population had remained neutral, the action of the English would not have been discordant with the established traditions of war, but the women, far from remaining neutral, continually helped the fighters by furnishing them with supplies and precise information about the strength, disposition and movements of the English troops.

"Nonetheless, the English general, driven by a sentiment of humanity without precedent and rejecting the use of very rigorous measures sanctioned by tradition, removed the inhabitants from the farms and placed them in camps where they always received similar food to that given to the British soldiers, in addition to shelter and many useful articles to which the English soldier is a stranger.

"Lord Kitchener, in adopting a system of concentration camps, was therefore guided by humanistic motives rather than by necessary military considerations, which he would have better served by leaving the women and children to their natural protectors and rigorously punishing those guilty of espionage.

"Apart from that, many complaints were addressed to the chief general by burghers who had surrendered and whose families had been mistreated, their cattle and supplies confiscated in accordance with the orders of the Commandant-Generals of the Boer forces who still operated in the Transvaal and Orange River colonies.

"General Louis Botha had ordered the burning down of the farms of neutral or submissive burghers. Since it was impossible to put guards all over the country to protect these unhappy folk in their homes, their displacement into a central camp was indispensable for their security.

"The high mortality rate in these camps is principally attributable to the deplorable state of destitution and disease in which a great number of people arrived in the camps and became easy victims of epidemic diseases. This mortality would have been considerably greater if one had permitted these thousands of women and children to remain on the isolated farms of a barren country or to err to adventure by following the commandos.

"As for the type of wellbeing adopted in these camps, it is evident that concentrations of non-combatants cannot, at the beginning of their organization at the theatre of war, be provided with facilities and commodities that can be procured in a civilized country and in times of peace, but neither effort nor expense were, and are, being provided to elevate their wellbeing as rapidly as the military needs necessitate it.

"To prove that the Boers who still hold the country appreciate the care that we take of their families, it is permitted to mention that on several occasions commandos asked to admit into the camp women who accompanied them.

"The camps were inspected by a Boer officer, Captain Malan, delegated for this purpose by General B. Viljoen. Captain

Malan declared himself entirely satisfied with the arrangements made for the women and children. In addition, Lord Kitchener offered an escort to General Botha, General Delarey and to Mr. Steyn to allow them to inspect the camps personally.

"Nevertheless, the humane politics on this subject adopted by the English troops were misinterpreted, giving rise to slander. Lord Kitchener has just informed General Louis Botha that all the women and children who are in the camps and disposed to leave them will be sent to the general quarters of the Boers. He also asked the Commandant-General to designate the place where they can be sent to.

"So the allegations that were made about the English saying that 'the noble and generous traditions have not been followed' and also that 'methods of war which are no longer of our epoch' constitute a serious, false expose which cannot in any way be proved by the existing facts.

"His Royal Highness guarantees the truth of the facts contained in this answer. He hopes that you will have the goodness to send copies to members of the different lodges of the Alpina, who, after their erroneous appreciation of the facts made them ask you to make the reprobations contained in your letter to your English brothers, who are never deaf to an appeal made to their sentiments of justice and humanity.

"I ask you, Grand Master, to agreed to the expression of fraternal friendship".²⁹

Kitchener made the offer to send all the women and children in the camps willing to leave to the two republics in a

29. FMH UGLE, Miscellaneous Papers, Transvaal 1881 - 1910: UGLE - Grand Loge Suisse Alpina, 18 January, 1902.

Freemason's Hall
London. W. C.
18/ January 1902

(Translation)

Frères Vénérables Grand Maître.

Je suis chargé par le Frères Vénérable Grand Maître de vous exprimer le regret qu'éprouve Son Altesse Royale de ce que des circonstances inévitables n'aient pas permis de répondre plus tôt à votre lettre motivée par la malheureuse guerre de l'Afrique du Sud.

Son Altesse Royale qui a suivi, avec le plus grand intérêt comme aussi avec la plus grande anxiété, tous les incidents de la guerre, apprend avec un profond regret que ses frères de Suisse ont ajouté foi à des récits qui non seulement sont entachés d'inexactitude mais encore semblent provenir de sources malveillantes.

Votre lettre du 17 Décembre 1901, émet, comme fait avouer, la théorie que l'Angleterre a, au cours de la guerre de l'Afrique du Sud, dévié des traditions nobles et généreuses en adoptant "des mesures de guerre qui ne sont plus de notre époque, et que des hommes, particulièrement des Maçons amis de la justice et de l'humanité doivent reprouver énergiquement."

La mortalité dans les Camps de Concentration constitue le seul fait avancé dans la lettre, qui soit à l'appui de cette grave accusation. Toutefois, il est évident que ceux dont vous représentez les idées sont sous le coup d'une grave méprise relativement à l'origine de ces Camps lorsqu'ils en attribuent la formation à une politique inhumaine délibérée.

Les Loges Maçonniques Suisses ignorent

The first page of the lengthy reply, reproduced in full in this dissertation, from the United Grand Lodge of England dated 18 January, 1902, to La Grande Loge Suisse Alpina on its complaint about the South African prisoner-of-war camps.

letter dated 1 December, 1901 to the two State presidents. As the Presidents had complained of the treatment of the women and children, "they must therefore look after them".³⁰ "President Steyn answered that he could not receive them, especially as Lord Kitchener had not only had all the homes destroyed but also the bedding of the women and children", wrote J.D. Kestell, Chaplain to the President.³¹

Alpina's protest about the camps reflected the horror and indignation then increasing both on the Continent and in Britain itself, where conditions in the camps were being used as a political weapon against Kitchener's continuation of the war.³²

30. J.D. Kestell: Through Shot and Flame, p. 228

31. Ibid.

32. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 349, 352 (W.J. De Kock: The Anglo-Boer War 1899 - 1902).

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL UNION AND MASONIC HOPES: 1902 - 1914

The Treaty of Vereeniging of 1902 firmly established British supremacy in South Africa and spurred Lord Milner, High Commissioner for South Africa and the Governor of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, to push ahead with his plans to create a federation of South Africa. The key to the scheme he saw was the entrenchment of British rule in the Transvaal. Immigration would swell the British population while anglicising educational policies would ensure the English language would supersede Dutch among children.

The former republics were declared crown colonies and many thousands of Boer soldiers, especially in the Cape Colony, were imprisoned or disenfranchised as punishment for their part in the war. However, the most urgent problem was the repair of the war damage to people and property.

Milner, assisted by a group of young men who became known as the "Kindergarten", tackled the enormous problem of repatriation and settlement of both Boer, Uitlander and Bantu, completing it by March 1903 at a cost of £16,500,000.¹ The nationalising of the railway systems of the two colonies through a British loan led to the creation of the Inter-Colonial Council to advise on matters of common interest and, flowing from that, eventuated a conference of all British colonies and protectorates south of the Zambesi which established a South African Customs Union and abolished the differing internal tariffs.² It was a time of rebuilding, reorganising and reconciliation.

It was a time too for masonic forgiveness and reconstruction,

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1. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 358 - 361 (S.B. Spies: Reconstruction and Unification, 1902 - 1910).
 2. Ibid., pp. 360 - 361.

though sentiments expressed publicly were obviously affected by the newly-won British superiority. Typical were those given by the District Grand Master of the Transvaal English Constitution, George Richards, who had spent the war in Britain. In a speech to the Jubilee Masters Lodge in Britain he said he saw "upon the horizon the first streaks of the coming dawn of those happy days for which South African masons had so long and anxiously watched. "He saw by the first ray of that dawning day arising from the days of misgovernment the first grand rays of justice and right. He saw the day coming when his banner would float as District Grand Master side by side with their banner and when the long honoured toast of Queen and Craft should be heard with the hope and expectancy of abiding loyalty. When that day should come, it would be seen that Freemasonry would play an important part in cementing in peace and harmony the hearts of those who were building up the greatest Empire the world had ever seen".³

Lodges resumed work gradually and in 1902 he presided again over his District Grand Lodge in Johannesburg. He told the meeting: "For the first time in the annual convocations of this District Grand Lodge our banner has been lifted under the aegis of our country's flag, and as a loyal and true Freemason - loyal to our King and Protector and true to the badge of English Freemasonry which I wear - I deem it right and fitting to express the hope that, as long as the Saxon race endures and as long as Saxon speech is heard, the flag of our faith and our freedom side by side with the banner of our Craft will, during the years to come, signal forth to the people of this land the message of 'Peace on earth, goodwill towards men'".⁴

"The progress of the war has brought grief and desolation to

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3. The Cape Argus, 18 April, 1900: Level's masonic column quoting The Freemason's report on Richards.
 4. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1915: Meeting, 29 April, 1902, Richards' report, p. 14.

thousands of homes in the Great Empire of which we form part and in the heavy death roll claimed from the soldiers of the King, we mourn many members of our masonic brotherhood", he added.⁵

Dr. C.J. Egan, the District Grand Master of the Eastern Division, English Constitution, in contrast offered the olive branch. "Now the horrors of war have been removed from our country it is our duty to strive after peace and goodwill and to join hands of citizenship between Britons and Boers".⁶

In a less exuberant and more conciliatory fashion, the Provincial Grand Secretary Netherlands Constitution in South Africa, W.H. Tiffany, advised lodges that they should resume working as soon as they could. He looked "upon the resumption of masonic work in the adjoining colonies as likely to prove a pacific element in the relations between Brethren of different nationality under the new conditions of the country".⁷

"I look forward with confidence to our Craft playing no unimportant part in the unification of the two white races, that have so sternly battled for mastery, in an indissoluble bond of wise brotherhood", the Scottish District Grand Master of Natal, R.D. Clark, told his lodge on 27 December, 1901. While the war had had little effect on Scottish lodges in Natal, he said, the Relief Committee for masonic refugees from the north had done sterling work with a grant of 100 guineas from the Grand Lodge of Scotland.⁸

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5. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1915: Meeting, 29 April, 1902, Richards' report, p. 14.
 6. DGL ED EC, Minute Book, 11 September, 1895 - 9 September, 1903: Meeting, 10 September, 1902, Egan's Report, p. 22.
 7. CA A 2263 Vol.14, PGL NC, Correspondence 1903: Tiffany - Lodge Star of Africa, Port Elizabeth, 10 March, 1902.
 8. NSA DGL NATAL SC: Meeting, 27 December, 1901, p.24.

True to the slogan "Freemasonry follows the flag". English Freemasonry established many new lodges in the conquered Republics, particularly the Transvaal, in the postwar boom. All districts of the English Constitution reported increased membership. As Richards spoke to his reconvened District Grand Lodge in Johannesburg in April, 1902, lodges in his Transvaal district numbered 27 with 25 back at work.⁹ By 1904 the number had increased to 35 with 2112 members, and to 44 by 1907 with 2728 members.¹⁰

Membership in the English Eastern Division, approximately the Eastern Province, rose from 1244 in 1899 to 1246 in 1900 in 29 lodges, and to 1689 in 1904 with 34 lodges.¹¹ The smaller Central Division which included Griqualand West and Bechuanaland saw its membership rise from 573 in eight lodges in 1898 to 609 in 1904 and 614 in 1907.¹²

Although less hit than other areas, the Western Division of the English Constitution also recorded a rush of new members after the war. From a strength of 959 in 12 lodges in 1898 the roll increased to 1123 in 18 lodges in 1900, to 1512 in 18 lodges in 1902 and to 1762 in 18 lodges in 1904.¹³

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9. TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 30 April, 1895 - 2 October, 1915: Meeting, 29 April, 1902, Returns.
 10. Ibid., Returns, 17 April, 1905; Ibid., 23 April, 1907.
 11. DGL ED EC, Minute Book, 11 September, 1895 - 9 September, 1903: Returns, 31 March, 1899; Ibid., 12 September, 1900; Ibid., Minute Book, 14 September, 1904 - 26 March, 1941: Returns, 14 September, 1904.
 12. KEA DGL CD EC, Minute Book, 22 January, 1896 - 24 September, 1913: Returns, 31 December, 1898, 31 December, 1904, 31 December, 1907.
 13. PMC 1/1/4 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 20 July, 1891 - 14 April, 1903: Returns 31 December 1898, 31 December 1900, 31 December, 1902, 21 March, 1905.

In the English Natal District, a membership of 787 in 18 lodges in 1898 rose to 1368 in 27 lodges in 1906.¹⁴

Since the formation of the first regular Scottish Constitution Lodge in South Africa - the Southern Cross, Cape Town - in 1860, Scottish Freemasonry had made slow but steady progress. It, too, benefitted after the end of the war. In 1899 it had nine lodges in the Cape, three in the South East Africa Division, which approximated Natal, and 12 in the South African Republic. By 1913 it had 10 lodges in the Cape, 3 in the Orange Free State, 10 in Natal and, because of the gold mines, an astonishing 42 in the Transvaal with 2702 members.¹⁵

The rush of recruits to the Scottish masonic lodges in Natal in postwar years was so heavy that the newly-formed District Grand Lodge (constituted 29 December 1897 from the defunct S.E. Division District Grand Lodge) considered a resolution in 1902 to limit candidates entering lodges to two a year, an unusual request which was, however, rejected.¹⁶ New Scottish lodges were formed - Coronation at Newcastle (1902), Talana at Dundee (1903), Ladysmith Lodge (1904), Thistle at Durban (1905), Weenen County Lodge at Estcourt (1905), Maritzburg County Lodge at Pietermaritzburg (1905), Charlestown Lodge in that town (1906) and Dannhauser (1906).¹⁷ Masons employed on the railways, the coal mines and iron foundry at Newcastle after the war decided to form Coronation Lodge.¹⁸ A number

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14. FMH UGLE NATAL DGL Returns: 15 December 1898, 26 March, 1906.
 15. GLS Grand Lodge, Scotland: Grand Committee Proceedings 1899, 1913; TSA PGL TVL SC, Minute Book, 22 June, 1912 - 15 December, 1926: Meeting, 28 June, 1913.
 16. C.C. Clark: Blythswood Lodge History 1885 - 1905 (typed MSS); NSA DGL NATAL SC, Reports: Meeting, 31 May, 1903, p.12.
 17. NSA DGL NATAL SC, Returns: 1903 - 1906.
 18. Anon: Coronation Lodge SC History (typed MSS)

of unattached masons in the employ of the Natal Government railways formed Lodge Thistle at Durban.¹⁹ Lodge Caledonia at Durban recorded an influx of candidates from 1901 to 1905, including railway workers, clerks, bricklayers, carpenters, engravers, shopkeepers, labour agents, engineers and even a jockey.²⁰

After being two years in abeyance, the Transvaal and Free State Scottish District Grand Lodge, constituted on 2 March, 1896, met again in 1901 to try to resuscitate the district.²¹ It controlled 17 lodges before the war, 22 by 1903, 30 by 1904, 36 by 1906 and 42 by 1913.²²

Three Scottish lodges in the Cape - Southern Cross (1860) and Lorne (1880) at Cape Town, Royal Alfred (1862) at Simon's Town, met to form a "Provincial Grand Lodge for the Western Province" with Scotland's approval. The new Provincial Grand Lodge was inaugurated on 29 October, 1902 at De Goede Hoop Temple, Cape Town and John Andrews installed as its head.²³ By 1904 four new lodges had been added to the roll - Claremont (1902), Simon's Town Kilwinning (1903), Goodwill (1904) in Cape Town, and Cape Town Kilwinning (1904).²⁴ The new Scottish authority was renamed District Grand Lodge in 1907.²⁵ The District Grand Lodge for the Eastern Province was only formed in 1920.²⁶

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19. Anon.: Thistle Lodge SC History 1905 - 1934 (typed MSS).
 20. Caledonian Lodge SC Minute Book, 19 January, 1897 - 12 December, 1905: List initiations.
 21. TSA DGL TVL SC, Minute Book, 27 March, 1896 - 28 March, 1912: Meeting, 17 April, 1901
 22. Ibid., Returns: 28 March, 1903, 26 September, 1903, 7 November, 1904, 20 December, 1906, 28 June, 1913.
 23. DGL WP SC, Minute Book, 16 September, 1901 - 26 July, 1915: Meetings, 13 September, 1901, 29 October, 1902.
 24. Ibid., Returns: 1902, 1903, 1904.
 25. DGL WP SC, Letter Book 22 December, 1906 - 30 March, 1909 Grand Secretary - District Grand Lodge, 6 March, 1907.
 26. DGL EP SC, Minute Book, 2 August, 1920 - 2 October, 1938: Meeting, 2 October, 1920.

The Dutch lodges in South Africa, identified to some extent perhaps by would-be masons with the defeated in the war, attracted fewer recruits than the other constitutions and were slower in reorganising themselves, after suffering heavier disruption during the war than other constitutions. On 28 February, 1899, they reported a total membership of 866. De Goede Hoop in Cape Town had 128 members and De Broederband, Pretoria, 111.²⁷ No meetings of Provincial Grand Lodge had been held after the outbreak of war until 1902, except a special meeting on 31 August, 1900 to discuss applications for relief for prisoners of war.²⁸

After the war there was a spate of revivals of defunct lodges, particularly in 1905. New life came in that year to Morgenster at Kroonstad, Eindracht Maakt Macht in Johannesburg, which was granted a charter in 1899 but was not consecrated, and Vrede in the Free State. Brand Lodge at Rouxville declined, however to take up its newly granted charter and joined the Scottish Constitution, while Rising Star, Burghersdorp, could not be restarted.²⁹ By 1907 the Netherlandic Constitution had 16 active lodges with 911 members and 18 defunct lodges.³⁰ However, De Goede Hoop Lodge in Cape Town complained of too much activity "owing to the congestion of candidates ... it was decided to refuse to receive applications for six months", it reported.³¹ By 1913 the Netherlandic Constitution could record a total of 1510 members in all South Africa, with 23 lodges in the Cape and Free State and 7 under the recently constituted Provincial Grand Lodge of the Transvaal.³²

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27. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 28 August, 1899, Board's Report, p.3.
 28. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Meeting, 31 August, 1900, p.4.
 29. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 28 August, 1905: Board's Report, pp. 2 - 4.
 30. CA Unlisted PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Returns: 1908.
 31. CA Unlisted PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, August, 1904: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p.53.
 32. CA Unlisted PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Report: Meeting,, 19 September, 1913: Silberbauer's Report, p. xxiv.

The two wars of independence had brought home to The Hague that, because of the politically diversive forces at work in South Africa, regional masonic authorities were needed. Rule from Cape Town was at the best clumsy and easily interrupted by events. In 1902 the Great East of the Netherlands proclaimed E.J. Van Gorkom as Provincial Grand Master of the newly constituted masonic province of the Transvaal and O.H. Bate ruled over the remainder as Provincial Grand Master for South Africa (Transvaal excepted). Through opposition from Pretoria Lodge, the Transvaal authority was only inaugurated in 1906 with U.B. Vogts as the Provincial Grand Master.³³

DEPRESSION

Postwar euphoria soon gave way to severe depression lasting until 1909.³⁴ Milner's policy of material reconstruction was bringing rewards, but with reservations. He had failed to attract large numbers of British settlers to achieve population dominance. His anglicising educational policy was upset by the formation of schools, called Christian National, by the Dutch Reformed Church to preserve the Dutch language and, in so doing, stimulated the resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism.

Milner's achievements were real but did not ensure prosperity. Drought and reduced output from labour-handicapped gold mines were contributory causes to the economic recession that was first felt in 1903.³⁵

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33. PGL TVL NC, Minute Book, 23 April, 1906 - 27 August 1932: Inaugural meeting, 28 April, 1906.
34. C.W.G. Schumann: Structural Changes in South Africa 1806 - 1936, p. 112.
35. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 354 - 361 (S.B. Spies: Reconstruction and Unification 1902 - 1910).

Mirror-like, Freemasonry reflected the change in economic fortune. The number of resignations and exclusions for non-payment of lodge dues rose steadily until 1909 in every masonic district. In the English Eastern Division, membership on 31 March, 1906, was 2305, an increase of 93 on the previous year, but the number returned in arrear was much greater than any previous year - 258, in fact bringing a net loss in membership of 165.³⁶

Figures of those in arrears in the English Eastern Division had shown a steady increase from the war years - 131 in 1902 to 141 in 1903, 210 in 1904.³⁷

The Natal English division reflected less serious losses. Its officials wavered between optimism and pessimism in their reports. District Grand Secretary C.C.P. Douglas-de-Fenzi, told his District Grand Lodge in 1905: "The past year, despite the universal prevailing depression, has been one of steady progress". The numbers in arrears had, however, risen - 66 out of a membership of 991 in 1901, 121 out of a 1302 membership in 1902 and 120 out of a membership of 1452 in 23 lodges in 1904.³⁸ The next year he was gloomier: "The trifling decrease in membership is due to the very large number of resignations and exclusions which may fairly be regarded as a necessary result of the generally prevailing depression and consequent retrenchment", he reported, adding that, out of a membership of 1440, those in arrears numbered 150, with 68 excluded and 135 resigning as well.³⁹

Membership fell to 1368 in 1907, with 147 resigning and 81 excluded and Douglas-de-Fenzi commented: "The very heavy

36. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 12 September, 1906, Board's Report, p.10.

37. DGL ED EC Returns: 1902, 1903, 1904.

38. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 27 March, 1905, Secretary's Report, p. 17.

39. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 28 March, 1906, Secretary's Report, p. 38.

losses sustained during the past few years are a direct result of the acute depression which has prevailed in all walks of life throughout South Africa".⁴⁰ Membership dropped to 1327 in 1908, but there came signs of the end of the depression the following year with Natal's membership rising to 1408 and to 1415 in 1910, while resignations and exclusions were fewer.⁴¹

Richards resigned as District Grand Master of the English Division of the Transvaal in 1905 while still in London. His deputy, C. Aburrow, had already noted the erosion in membership because of the economy. By the end of 1903, 132 had been excluded from his district for non-payment of dues, out of a membership of 2112, and 98 were excluded by the end of 1904.⁴² The situation worsened by 1906, when 125 were excluded and 174 resigned out of a total membership of 2728 in 44 lodges.⁴³ By 1907 resignations had shot up to 195 with 65 exclusions. The Transvaal Board of General Purposes reported in April 1908: "The depression which has prevailed during the past 12 months has produced many cases of distress among deserving Brethren and families of Freemasons. These have been relieved by the Central Masonic Relief Fund" which received £428 from Transvaal's share of war relief funds sent from Britain.⁴⁴ The District Grand Lodge heard that, by the end of 1909, 508 members were in arrears, with 215 resignations and 100 exclusions.⁴⁵ The next year - 1910 - was equally disastrous, with 239 resignations and 133 exclusions out of a membership of 2894 in 53 lodges.⁴⁶

40. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 26 March, 1907, Secretary's Report, p. 31.

41. NEA DGL Natal EC Returns: 1909, 1910, 1911.

42. TEA DGL TVL EC Returns: 1904, 1905.

43. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meetings, 23 April, 1907, p.25.

44. Ibid., Meetings, 29 April, 1908, pp. 14, 25.

45. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 25 April, 1910, p.31.

46. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 24 April, 1911, p.42.

The large number of resignations in the Transvaal continued up to the start of the first World War, 199 resigning and 166 being excluded in 1912 and 253 resigning and 60 being excluded out of a membership of 2908 in 1913.⁴⁷

The Western Cape also felt the depression. "Owing to the continued state of depression throughout the Colony, there has been a considerable decrease in membership and a larger percentage of brethren in arrears ... out of the 24 lodges in the District (English Western Division) 16 have decreased in numbers ... the total decrease for the year 1907 is 134 members", the Board of General Purposes reported to the District Grand Lodge.⁴⁸ It provided statistics of members in arrears. In 1900, 8,01 per cent of a total membership of 1123 were in arrears; 14,06 per cent out of a total of 1771 in 1905; 18,09 per cent out of a total of 1774 in 1906; and a staggering 22,92 per cent out of a total of 1640 in 1907.⁴⁹ Membership dropped further to 1424 with 16,01% in arrears in 1910, but an improvement came the following year both in numbers and payment of dues when membership rose to 1496 with 13,45 per cent in arrears.⁵⁰

Seventeen resignations were reported in 1909 by one lodge - Charles Warren Lodge - at Kimberley. "These are attributed to the great depression prevailing throughout South Africa and the retrenchment which has taken place in Kimberley during the past year and the brethren long to seek pastures new".⁵¹ Of the 106 members, 44 were in arrears, the majority of whom had left town, it told the District Board of General Purposes of the Central Division.⁵²

47. TEA DGL TVL EC Returns: 1913, 1914.

48. PMC DGL WD EC, Meeting, 17 March, 1908: Board's report, pp. 3 - 4.

49. Ibid.

50. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1920. Comparative summary of membership and fees, p.20.

51. KEA DGL CD EC Report: Meeting, 14 March, 1909, Charles Warren Lodge, p. 13.

52. Ibid.

Richard Giddy Lodge, also in Kimberley, was by August 1907 in financial straits owing to subscriptions being more than nine months in arrears, but receipt in September of a legacy of £250 from a deceased brother's estate eased the problem for a time.⁵³

In the English Central Division which included Kimberley, overall membership fell from 626 in 1905 to 526 in 1909 because of the depression and to 517 by 1914.⁵⁴

"Considering the depression prevalent in the Colony, the financial position of the lodge is fairly satisfactory", reported Lodge Orange at Rustenburg, Transvaal, to the Netherlandic Provincial Grand Lodge, meeting for the last time on 31 August, 1906 as a united authority.⁵⁵ The Dutch lodges in the Transvaal and Free State won their own Provincial Grand Lodge in that year.⁵⁶

Star of Africa Lodge at Jagersfontein in the Orange River Colony had many calls in 1907 on its Benevolent fund for distressed masons, giving out £60.15s.3d.⁵⁷ The premier lodge, De Goede Hoop, with a membership of 143, complained "upon the continued dearth, as it were, in candidates for initiation; but it will readily be understood that this is due to the present depressed times".⁵⁸

Commenting in 1908 upon the "present financial depression",

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- 53. KEA Richard Giddy Lodge, Minute Book, 6 August, 1903 - 7 September, 1911: Meetings, 1 August, 1907, 5 September, 1907.
 - 54. KEA DGL CE EC Returns: 1905 - 1914.
 - 55. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1906, Orange's Report, p.4.
 - 56. PGL TVL NC, Minute Book 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Inauguration Ceremony, 28 April, 1906.
 - 57. CA Unlisted PGL (TVL Excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 30 August, 1907, Star of Africa Report, p.XLIV.
 - 58. Ibid., Meeting, 30 August, 1907, De Goede Hoop Report, pp. XLVII - XLVIII.

Deputy Grand Master of Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa, C.C. Silberbauer said: "Hitherto in times of unexampled prosperity candidates and joining members were readily forthcoming. Nowadays those sources of revenue have naturally diminished".⁵⁹ He warned lodges not to relax "the strictness relative to the admission of candidates" and give way to the "seductive allurements of financial expediency".⁶⁰

Figures of "severe decreases" in membership - 109 in all, including 61 suspended for non-payment of dues and 37 resignations, leaving a roll of 911, were given to his Provincial Grand Lodge in 1908.⁶¹ The numbers suspended for non-payment of dues dropped to 59 in 1909 and 35 in 1910, but resignations rose to 65 in 1909 and 76 in 1910.⁶²

De Goede Trouw in 1909 suspended 25 of its members for not meeting their liabilities, leaving 112 on the roll, but despite "the bad times" maintained its contributions to various charities.⁶³ "On account of the depression ... five brethren have resigned", reported Orange Lodge at Paarl.⁶⁴ "The depression is resting heavily on the country", the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in the Transvaal heard in 1908. Thirty-six members had been struck off for non-payment of dues, leaving 328 in that area.⁶⁵ Defaulters dropped to 12 the next year - 1909 - and membership climbed to 338.⁶⁶

As the economic tide finally turned, Silberbauer told the southern Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in 1911: "You stand

59. CA Unlisted PGL (TVL Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 28 August, 1908, Silberbauer's report, pp. XVII-XVIII.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid., Returns: 1908, 1909, 1910.

63. Ibid., Meeting, 27 August, 1909, De Goede Trouw Report, p.39.

64. Ibid., Paarl Report, p. 43.

65. PGL TVL NC Minute Book, 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Meeting, 29 August, 1908.

66. Ibid., Meeting, 27 August, 1909.

on a more favourable basis than in any previous year. Your province now includes 975 adherents, dispersed among 22 working lodges. Suspension for non-payment of dues have decreased by 75 per cent as compared to last year" - from 35 to 9.⁶⁷

CLOSER UNION

Milner left South Africa in April 1905 to be succeeded by Lord Selborne "His material reconstruction had been an essential prologue to the unification movement", writes S.B. Spies.⁶⁸

The flag of political union was taken up by Milner's erstwhile enemies, one-time Commando leaders Louis Botha, Prime Minister of the Transvaal in 1907 and Jan Smuts, his Colonial Secretary, who advocated conciliation between Afrikaners and British, seeing hope that the regional disputes in South Africa would be overcome by joining the four colonies of the Cape, Transvaal, Free State and Natal into a strong union, enabling the new South Africa to seek fulfilment within the British Empire.⁶⁹

Those who saw strength in uniting now included both the "imperialists" - the successors to Lord Milner left behind to administer the former republics under Lord Selborne and dedicated to the maintenance of British influence in South Africa - and the "anti-imperialists" - that is, the Afrikaner Bond in the Cape Colony and many Afrikaners who saw union as a means to eradicating imperial influence.⁷⁰

When John X. Merriman's Bond-supported ministry took office

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- 67. CA Unlisted PGL (TVL Excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 25 August, 1911, p. xvi.
 - 68. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 362 (S.B. Spies: Reconstruction and Unification 1902-1910)
 - 69. M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, pp. 339 - 343; C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 365 (S.B. Spies: Reconciliation and Unification 1902 - 1910)
 - 70. M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, pp. 346 - 347.

in the Cape Colony in February 1908 three of the four colonies were in control of the "anti-imperialists" - Transvaal and the Free State achieving responsible government the year before. The time was propitious for a national convention to discuss a constitution for a united South Africa. It met between October 1908 and February 1909 under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice of the Cape Colony, Sir Henry de Villiers, who was a Freemason. Its draft constitution, after amendments, was finally accepted to give rise to the South African Bill, the legal tool to shape the Union on 31 May, 1910.⁷¹

Again acting as a mirror to current events, the masonic movement in South Africa reacted to the political movement for union. The 1875 and 1895 attempts to form a United Grand Lodge for South Africa originated from the outward expansion of Freemasonry through mainly economic forces as settlers, soldiers and merchants established new settlements and lodges along the Cape Eastern coast, Natal or in the Cape Midlands, and later as new lodges were set up in the diamond and gold fields. Now the motivation for an independent masonic authority in South Africa had political overtones, with masons viewing the concept of a union in South Africa as a prelude to a masonic union.

From the end of the war English lodges, particularly those in the Transvaal, had pursued the goal of independence for South Africa or, as second best, for the Transvaal. The Dutch lodges, although several supported independence, were generally opposed to it, fearful of being swamped by the British element and losing the use of Dutch in ritual work and being linked to "foreign" masonic authorities overseas. The resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism in these years no doubt contributed to Dutch masonic opposition which stemmed as well from internal problems. Since the loss of their Deputy Grand Master, Sir Christoffel Brand in 1874, the Dutch Constitution in South Africa had sought some solid

71. M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, pp. 347 - 349.

foundation in its leadership which had been divided over several issues, including the questions of religion, allegiance to the Netherlands, breakaway lodges and chapters and, more important, opposition to contentious decrees from The Hague, as will be shown in the next chapter.

The masonic journals of the day, unfettered by masonic authorities, led the campaign for closer union and independence. If South Africa could unite, so could the four masonic constitutions in South Africa - the English, Dutch, Irish and Scottish, their editors wrote.

The Masonic Illustrated, published in Britain, set the tone. "Who knows but what it may be reserved for Freemasons to accomplish all that diplomacy and the sword have failed to accomplish in reconciling all conflicting issues in that country (South Africa). It may be a far cry but it is not inconceivable".⁷²

In South Africa the Masonic Review, edited by C. Carlyle-Gall and published in Durban while it existed, was an important protagonist for unity.

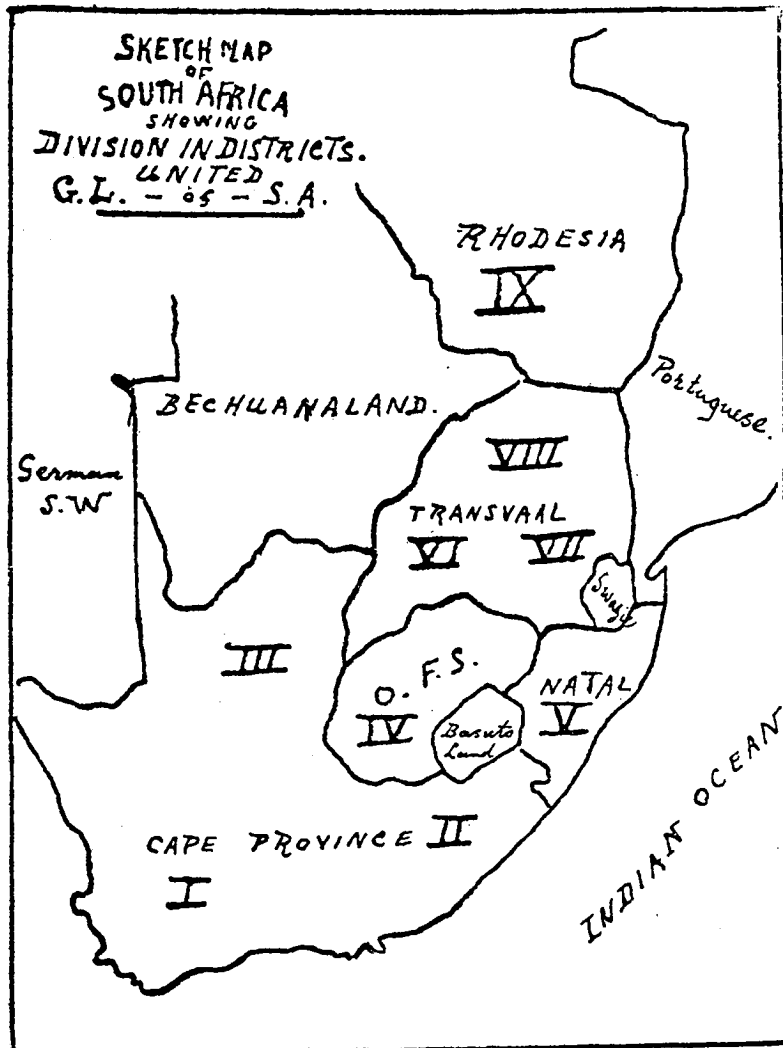
In the issue of November, 1905, he wrote: "Today the mind of South Africa is being directed towards a scheme of the utmost importance, which comprises no more and no less than the unification of vast commercial interests. The history of South Africa is now in course of formation, and what we do in our generation will either result in the ultimate benefit or retrogression of our country.

"The spirit of a new patriotism is moving over the face of the waters, and if nationalisation of railways, harbours, and ships tends towards this much-to-be-desired end, then we can add with all our heart and soul, 'God be thanked'".⁷³

72. Masonic Illustrated, November, 1904, p. 31.

73. S.A. Masonic Review, November, 1905. p. 42.

A UNITED GRAND LODGE OF SOUTH AFRICA.



This illustration shows the solution of all difficulties in a nutshell. Three Districts in Cape Colony, or more if desired; one District Grand Lodge for the O.F.S. and Basutoland, one District G.L. for Natal, or should the work be too arduous, nothing easier than making two Districts in the Garden Province. Three Districts for the Transvaal; Eastern, Western and Northern. Half of the 50 odd Johannesburg Lodges to the Eastern, the other half to the Western District. The Northern to take in Pretoria and the railway lines going North and East. One District for Rhodesia. It must not be forgotten that the launching of an eventual Grand Lodge would tend to amalgamate many of the smaller Lodges now competing one against the other, especially in the smaller towns.

The South African Masonic Journal in the 1900s led a campaign for a United Grand Lodge in South Africa. This map, reproduced from its issue of 30 June, 1912, attempts to solve some of the geographical difficulties of masonic unity.

"But the question arises in the minds of Freemasons: can our Brotherhood hold aloof from a movement of this kind? We think that in act and mind we ought to take a share of this onward movement, and that is one chief reason why we advocate the formation of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa. Freemasonry in South Africa is no longer in its infancy. It has grown into a stalwart youth, with a wonderful future before it. We are firmly convinced in our masonic mind that the union of all lodges under one United Grand Lodge would be a source of unknown strength to the whole body politic.

"We are well aware that difficulties in the inauguration of a scheme of this kind must arise. Objections many and varied will be stated. Some will assert that such a scheme is aiming a vital blow at accepted and recognised measures of procedure, at the individualism and esprit de corps attaching to different constitutions, that the representation of each constitution will not be equitably maintained; that instead of furthering the cause of Masonic fraternity, it will introduce friction and jealousy; that the present system has worked well, and has been proved.⁷⁴

"Why then should it be abandoned? That the old ties binding each Lodge to its parent Lodge would be broken, and that this disruption would weaken and not strengthen the particular Lodge.

"To all of these objections we would reply that amalgamation of force and energy always denotes strength, that the ties with parent Lodges are to a great extent sentimental, that the vast distance separating South Africa from Europe, in many instances, means inconvenient delay, when questions of importance arise which demand immediate settlement".⁷⁵

On Christmas Day, 1905, he argued for a general masonic charity in South Africa, adding: "The fault lies primarily with

74. S.A. Masonic Review, November, 1905, p. 42.

75. *Ibid.*

the fact that we are disunited, so long as separate Constitutions mar our usefulness, and our contributions to go to swell the funds of Grand Lodges thousands of miles distant, so long we will be unable to fulfil the dictates of our hearts and the demands of our Order.⁷⁶

"The remedy lies in our own hands. No unconstitutional action is suggested, but let us at least decide to combine our forces, free from the artificial boundaries of Constitutions, for the purpose of forming a general fund for Masonic charity.

"The time will surely come when these artificial barriers will be swept away and we will blossom forth as The United Grand Lodge of South Africa. We are strong and vigorous enough to be entrusted with autonomy, and we express the fervent hope that the year 1906 will see the consummation of this cherished project".⁷⁷

But the traditionalists were not so easily swayed. In the same issue, a correspondent, Gavel, argued against unity.

"I must say I cannot agree with your views at all. For what reason should we upset the present arrangement? No doubt you have given some arguments in favour of a United Grand Lodge, but to my mind they are not conclusive."⁷⁸

"Do you mean to suggest, and I must say it looks like it, that the functions of the Craft are not being properly carried out by the present officials? Well, if you do, I don't, for I think everything is working as harmoniously as possible.

"Your suggestion, if carried out, will throw a bone of contention amongst us which will inevitably cause us to be

76. S.A. Masonic Review, 25 December, 1905, p. 10.

77. Ibid.

78. S.A. Masonic Review, 25 December, 1905, p. 15.

rent asunder in different camps, and with strong but opposite views".⁷⁹

Supporters there were. A correspondent M.M. wrote in the same Masonic Review: "By all means let us have a powerful Grand Lodge, presided over by a thoroughly competent, respected and lovable Grand Master, and let us have self-government on all matters pertaining exclusively to South Africa."⁸⁰

"At present, it must be confessed, our Lodges are little removed from a similar number of congenial clubs, with the one end of fostering social reunions.

"We want a vitalising force in South Africa to send abroad the inherent goodness of our Craft, and to lay the foundations amongst us of a monument more lasting than brass, typifying peace, love, goodwill and genuine good works. Such a vitalising force will be found in the formation of a United Grand Lodge. Let Natal lead the way in South Africa".⁸¹

The masonic unity movement drew strength from official statements on political union. The Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, the English Grand Master, visited South Africa in February 1906, touring as Inspector General of H.M. Forces. Freemasons of all constitutions in South Africa and Rhodesia presented loyal addresses to him.

Part of the English Natal Division's address read: "Freemasonry affords common ground upon which men of otherwise diverse views and political creeds may come together in unity and brotherly accord, we believe - with evidences for our belief -

79. S.A. Masonic Review, 25 December, 1905, p. 15.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

81. *Ibid.*

and will constitute, we hope, in a still higher degree in the future, an important factor in establishing that spirit of fraternity and union of heart and hand which will find its final development in a South African Confederation in its most ample sense".⁸²

Connaught obviously agreed for, on returning to Britain, he addressed Grand Lodge of England functionaries at Mansion House, London, in May that year. "There is nothing that could do more to promote good feeling between British and Boer populations than Freemasonry. There was no ill-feeling between the Freemasons of either country. They had worked amicably together for the good of the Craft and the benefit of the Empire ... They could bring people together and sink their differences for the good of the British Empire".⁸³

Nevertheless, this sudden enthusiasm among South African masons for unity and independence was to be kept in check by the supreme authorities overseas. Meeting in a committee room of the House of Commons in London in 1905, Grand Lodge representatives of England, Ireland, and Scotland with Earl Amherst, the English Pro-Grand Master, in the chair, laid down conditions for recognising new Grand Lodges overseas.

They agreed that: "The question of recognising a new Grand Lodge in any Colony or other territory in which the three Grand Lodges have equal jurisdiction and have warranted Lodges working there shall not be taken into consideration unless at least two-thirds of the lodges under each jurisdiction have signified their adhesion to such new body and such recognition shall only be granted by agreement of the three Grand Lodges.

82. NEA DGL NATAL EC Reports: Meeting, 26 February, 1906, Presentation Addresses to Connaught, 26 February, 1906.

83. NEA DGL NATAL EC Reports: Meeting, 26 February, 1906, Connaught's speech, 4 May, 1906, pp. 12 - 14. (Connaught's speech bound with this report)

"After the recognition of such new Grand Lodge as a sovereign body, the respective authorities of the three Grand Lodges will surrender their rights to warrant new lodges within the jurisdiction of the new body provided always that the rights of lodges not adhering to the new body shall be fully safeguarded".⁸⁴

Closer union, but not masonic independence, in South Africa, was obviously the aim of the Grand Lodges overseas with jurisdiction in this country. The Netherlands Supreme Government, in harmony with them, went further to impose a ban on all Dutch Lodges from discussing schemes for a United Grand Lodge for South Africa. Provincial Grand Master of the Transvaal, U.B. Vogts, told his lodge: "As a masonic body under the Grand East of the Netherlands we are precluded officially from dealing with the subject - the movement for a sovereign Grand Lodge for South Africa".⁸⁵ The British Grand Lodges later reminded lodges of a similar restriction under the English Constitution. Permission to discuss masonic independence in a lodge could only be granted by the local Provincial or District Grand Master under Rule 218A and 218B of the Book of Constitutions.⁸⁶

The Dutch lodge, Peace and Harmony, Kimberley, which put forward a resolution to Provincial Grand Lodge in 1904 that the time had now arrived to consider the forming of a Grand Lodge for South Africa, was firmly squashed by the Board of Provincial Grand Lodge officers, being told that it should "beware of becoming involved in propositions not only at variance with its bounden duty to Grand East but seriously calculated to jeopardise the harmonious relations existing between the four constitutions".⁸⁷

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84. PGL S.Cape IC Correspondence: Grand Lodge Ireland - to Secretary, report on conference London, 29 June, 1905.
85. PGL TVL NC, Minute Book, 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Meeting, 29 August, 1914, Vogt's address.
86. TEA DGL TVL EC: Special meeting, 31 August, 1914, p.3.
87. PGL TVL NC: Special Meeting, 31 August, 1904; Board of Provincial Grand Lodge Officers, Appendix J, pp. 67-67.

The Board added: "It cannot make Provincial Grand Lodge a party either directly or indirectly to any proposition capable of being construed into disloyalty to the Grand East (of the Netherlands) or hostility to the great governing bodies with which it is in amity".⁸⁸

Discussion on the subject in Midland Lodge at Graaff-Reinet was abruptly stopped by a senior mason, R. Treadwell. A member had suggested a discussion in lodge on the merits of a Grand Lodge of South Africa at their meeting in October, 1913, to be told that the consent of The District Grand Lodge had to be obtained first.⁸⁹

Lodge Coronation, a Scottish lodge at Newcastle, Natal, "sounded the call to masonic union" in 1906 to other lodges without avail.⁹⁰ Another Scottish lodge, Middleburg United Lodge in the Transvaal, sponsored "with great enthusiasm" a United Grand Lodge of South Africa in April, 1906, circularised the 36 Scottish lodges in the Transvaal and obtained a two-thirds majority in favour of a Grand Lodge.⁹¹

With this support it gave notice of motion to its District Grand Lodge that there was a need to establish a United Grand Lodge of South Africa. At the District Grand Lodge meeting in December, 1906 the Transvaal Scottish District Grand Master, H.F.E. Pistorius, said the question met with the approval of the majority of the Brethren. "The motion had been brought forward solely in the interests of

88. PGL TVL NC, Special Meeting, 31 August, 1904: Board of Provincial Grand Lodge Officers, Appendix J, p. 67.

89. T.G. Saunders: History Midland Lodge 1862 - 1922, p. 40.

90. M.J. Alexander: Our Golden Jubilee, District Grand Lodge Natal Scottish Constitution, 1897 - 1947, p. 27.

91. PMC, H. Laver: History Middleburg United Lodge SC 1893 - 1936 (typed MSS), p.2.

Freemasonry in South Africa and with no thought of disloyalty to the Grand Lodge of Scotland. However, we as a District Grand Lodge and representatives of that body, could not initiate a movement of this nature. It rested with the subordinate lodges of the various constitutions".⁹² He had no other course but to rule the motion out of order.⁹³

Two years later the irrepressible Middleburg Lodge campaigned for a United Grand Lodge for the Transvaal. Again circulars were sent to all lodges but, despite promised support, the movement lapsed until 1926 when it was revived briefly again.⁹⁴

A German-speaking Lodge, Zur Eintracht, in Cape Town, petitioned in 1913 for its release from the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge and institution of direct relations with Holland. This was seen as a move by unity-minded lodges to join forces in a United Grand Lodge but swiftly representations were made by the local masonic authorities to stop the petition. The Grand East of the Netherlands in The Hague heard O.H.Bate, a delegate from South Africa, protest that, if Zur Eintracht's petition were granted, the whole of the Provincial Grand Lodge in South Africa would disappear. "The cession of this lodge would soon lead to the secession of the other (Dutch) lodges". It would be a step nearer the establishment of a South African Grand Lodge, he claimed.⁹⁵

Supporting him was a senior Dutch mason, M.S. Lingbeek, who added the petition was a "dagger thrust aimed at the heart of the organisation".⁹⁶

92. TSA DGL TVL SC, Minute Book 27 March, 1896 - 28 March, 1912: Meeting, 20 December, 1906.pp. 325-326

93. Ibid.

94. H. Laver: History Middleburg United Lodge SC, (typed MSS) p.2.

95. Grand East General Bulletin 1913; PGL (TVL Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 29 August, 1913, Annexure pp. 3 - 4.

96. Ibid., pp. 4 - 6.

It was true, he added, that the English-speaking masons under the Netherlandic Constitution would not have the same feeling for Holland as the Dutch-speaking masons had. But the future for the 1200 masons in South Africa under Holland was doubtful if Zur Eintracht were allowed to secede. He said: "The Provincial bonds of the different constitutions existing in South Africa have prevented the establishment of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa and should be maintained".⁹⁷ The Grand East concurred, rejecting Zur Eintracht's petition.⁹⁸

The announcement of a conference of all leaders of constitutions to be held in Johannesburg on 4 October, 1909, no doubt inspired by the national conference called to discuss political union, was seized upon by the unionists as indication of preparations being made for a united Grand Lodge in South Africa. Mr. Wesley Francis, District Grand Master of Natal Division, English constitution, disillusioned them in his address to his District Grand Lodge on 19 March, 1910. Instructed by his lodge to arrange a meeting of leaders of all constitutions, he said he had received favourable replies from all except the English Western Division which, at the last moment refused to attend. "The matter was allowed to lapse for some more favourable and more generally convenient opportunity", he said.⁹⁹

The conference was called only to reach mutual understanding on common problems. It was not called to discuss the establishment of a Grand Lodge of South Africa. "The intention was to discuss ... a number of questions which affect alike all branches of the Craft in South Africa without touching on the integrity of the Constitutions as they now exist, nor was there any desire from any quarter

97. PGL (TVL Excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 29 August, 1913, Annexure B, p.5.

98. Ibid., p. 10.

99. NEA DGL NATAL EC, Reports: Meeting, 19 March, 1910, Francis's report, p. 7.

that the matter - a United Grand Lodge - should be placed upon the agenda for discussion".¹⁰⁰

"My own opinion generally is that the time has gone by when there might have been one Grand Lodge for South Africa and that the time has not yet arrived - though come doubtless it will - when we can proceed to the formulation of more than one Grand Lodge". He envisaged eventually one Grand Lodge for the Cape and another for the rest of South Africa.¹⁰¹

Only a few adventurous lodges, it appears from records, braved official displeasure to discuss the question of a Grand Lodge.

In 1907 there were 231 lodges under the English, Scottish and Irish Constitutions in South Africa and 41 Netherlandic lodges.

Forty-two English lodges made up the Eastern Division, 24 the Western Division, 27 Natal, 43 Transvaal, 9 the Central Division, while nine lodges communicated with Grand Lodge direct. There were 64 Scottish and 15 Irish lodges.¹⁰² Under the Dutch Constitution, there were 16 lodges in the Transvaal and 24 in the remainder of South Africa.¹⁰³

There were 11 Provincial or District Grand Lodges - three English, one Scottish and one Dutch in the Cape, one English, one Irish, one Scottish and one Dutch in the Transvaal, and one English and one Scottish in Natal.¹⁰⁴

100. NEA DGL NATAL EC, Reports: Meeting 19 March, 1910, Francis's Report, p. 7.

101. Ibid.

102. Quatuor Coronati Lodge: Transactions XX, 1907, A.C. Austen, Review O.H. Bates' Some Notes on S.A. Masonic History, p. 21.

103. CA Unlisted PGL (TVL Excepted) NC, Reports: Extraordinary meeting, 22 April, 1907, p.17.

104. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 September, 1910, p.1.

Their leaders were not over-enthusiastic about independence. Though, under a United Grand Lodge of South Africa, there would be regional government as then, there could not be as many divisions and not as many high posts. The lack of support in high-ranking masonic circles for independence in the busy years from 1905 to 1914 is therefore understandable and is in remarkable contrast to the enthusiasm of the local masonic journals of that time to the idea.

Proponents for unity gained in strength from the fact that there were Freemasons among the delegates to the National Convention which met in 1908 and 1909 to draft the new Union Constitution. Chairman of the National Convention, Chief Justice of the Cape, Sir Henry de Villiers was a member of De Goede Hoop Lodge and past Provincial Grand Master of the South African Netherlandic Constitution.¹⁰⁵ The leader of the Transvaal delegation and Prime Minister of the Transvaal, General Louis Botha, had been initiated as a Freemason in the Transvaal although his lodge is not known.¹⁰⁶ Ex-President of the Orange Free State, F.W. Reitz, although not a delegate, and who was later to become President of the Senate, was also initiated into De Goede Hoop Lodge in Cape Town. This lodge's membership rolls bears the names of three Presidents of the Orange Free State - M.W. Pretorius, who was also President of the Transvaal, Sir John Brand and Reitz.¹⁰⁷

As political union in South Africa neared reality the surviving masonic magazine waved the banner of unity higher. Editor P. Deys in the first issue - 31 May, 1910 - of The S.A. Masonic Journal from Johannesburg wrote: "Union Day! A day

105. PMC Authors Lodge No. 3456: Transactions II, 1917, O.H. Bate: Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa, p. 115; Sir Edgar Walton: Inner History of National Convention of South Africa, pp. 28 - 30.

106. PMC Authors Lodge No. 3456: Transactions II, 1917, O.H. Bate: Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa, pp. 114 - 115

107.. Ibid., p. 115.

in the history of South Africa which will stand in letters of gold; a day uniting two races and four states into one solid whole; a day moreover when the first of the three great principles on which Freemasonry is founded will also come nationally and politically to the front".¹⁰⁸

The three principles referred to are "Brotherly love, Relief and Truth".¹⁰⁹

An ardent campaigner for masonic independence, The S.A. Masonic Review, ceased publication a year after its editor, G.L.L. Pope, had tried unsuccessfully to organise a conference calling for a United Grand Lodge of the Transvaal in Johannesburg on 29 January, 1908. He was officially admonished by the District Grand Lodge Transvaal and all masons warned by circular not to attend.¹¹⁰

Freemasons of all constitutions welcomed Field Marshal the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, the English Grand Master, on his arrival in South Africa to open the first Union Parliament. About 1250 attended the Cape Town City Hall on 2 November, 1910 to see the presentation to him of a joint address of loyalty from all provinces and districts.¹¹¹ Editor Deys of the S.A. Masonic Journal joined in the welcome through his journal, adding: "When reflecting that H.R.H. has come to South Africa to unite four countries we cannot help expressing the wish that at a not too distant date he may come again to unite the four constitutions of the Craft into the 'United Grand Lodge of South Africa'".¹¹²

108. S.A. Masonic Journal, 31 May, 1910, p.1.

109. Masonic Ritual EC.

110. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 September, 1910, p. 25; S.A. Masonic Review, Circular 11 January, 1908; TEA DGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 22 July, 1904 - 17 May, 1912: Circular to all lodges, 18 January, 1908.

111. NEA DGL NATAL EC, Reports: Meeting, 25 March, 1911, Appendix C, pp. 36 - 39.

112. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 September, 1910, p.6.

"Talk United Grand Lodge wherever there is an opportunity", enthused his journal, beginning a campaign to this end. Two thousand names of supporters were needed to start the movement, Deys wrote, and offered four open pages in several issues of his journal for signatures.¹¹³

"Under a local Grand Lodge think of the thousands of pounds that would remain in the country under our own control for our own benefit", he pointed out, referring to the somewhat erroneous impression that lodges of the four constitutions sent to their Grand Lodge in Europe large sums of money annually for charitable purposes.¹¹⁴

He suggested that Lord De Villiers of Wynberg, "who guided the South African National Convention to political union and welded the four colonies into a solid whole", should be the first Grand Master of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa.

"We are forcibly reminded (by political union) of the fact that our four constitutions are still separated from each other without reason. What has been done politically in this respect can be achieved masonically".¹¹⁵

The correspondence columns of the S.A. Masonic Journal were filled with letters for, and against, a Grand Lodge. The Rev. T. Henry Jones of Kimberley put the situation succinctly. "Though everybody recognises we should have our own Grand Lodge, that with political union there should also be masonic union, that, with the money now being sent to Europe, much good could be done in our own country, that with the existence of one Grand Lodge and through control and discipline, the present competition among lodges would cease and more care would be exercised in the admission of candidates, yet we confine ourselves to talking, expressing pious hopes and

113. S.A. Masonic Journal, 31 December, 1911, p. 43.

114. Ibid., p. 54.

115. Ibid.

letting things 'rip' ... we are as far off now as we were 20 years ago".¹¹⁶

The question of loyalty to respective Grand Lodges overseas featured prominently in letters to journals. Was an English mason, for instance, being disloyal in supporting a breakaway from overseas to form a local Grand Lodge? In the S.A. Masonic Journal of 30 November, 1911, a correspondent, calling himself PDGSW, wrote: "One would have thought that, after the achievement of the political union of South Africa, the masonic fraternity would agree that unity amongst the different constitutions is the only practical way of furthering and advancing the very best interests of our social fabric as, for instance, in the Dominion of New Zealand ... I consider it no disloyalty to the reigning District Grand Master to support a movement of this kind but, on the contrary, consider it to be the duty of every member who has given serious thought to the true aims of our Order to do what lies in his power to contribute by voice and vote to the object".¹¹⁷ He suggested a plebiscite of lodges to see whether they favoured a United Grand Lodge.¹¹⁸

The proponents for unity argued principally against the dispatch of money to Grand Lodges overseas, that the governing bodies overseas were aristocratic establishments which had nothing in common with masons in South Africa and that a United Grand Lodge in South Africa would ensure a would-be candidate would not, as then, be rejected by one constitution and accepted by another, and that the mother Grand Lodges overseas should welcome local independence as they had done with the newly-born Grand Lodges in Australia and New Zealand.¹¹⁹

Their cause was boosted with the publication in the S.A. Masonic

116. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 September, 1911, pp. 13 - 14.

117. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 November, 1911, p. 17.

118. Ibid.

119. S.A. Masonic Journal, 1911 - 1912 correspondence.

Journal of amounts sent overseas by some District Grand Lodges. The District Grand Lodge of the Transvaal Scottish Constitution remitted a total of £1664.2s.5d. for the years 1907 - 1911, irrespective of money sent by lodges direct for Grand Lodge dues and Scottish masonic charities. Yet there were five English District Grand Lodges, three Scottish, one Irish and two Netherlandic Provincial or District Grand Lodges in South Africa sending dues and charitable donations overseas. A total contribution of £4000 a year was suggested by the Journal. And it added: "A South African union of the Craft (will) serve as an example of the masonic spirit to all the world because it will assist in killing that seven-headed hydra called racialism and bring Briton and Boer together as Brothers".¹²⁰

C. Fred Silberbauer, brother of the Deputy Grand Master of the Dutch lodges, C.C. Silberbauer, spoke for the opponents of a United Grand Lodge, who included most of those in high masonic office. He pointed out there was already "a spirit of hearty cooperation between the four constitutions on all matters relating to education, charity, literary research, fraternal intercourse and good fellowship generally, whereby a wonderful degree of unity has already been attained and it is by no means certain if this state of things could in any way be bettered by a formal union".¹²¹ He listed other problems. There would be extreme difficulty in obtaining assent to unity of at least nineteenth-twentieths of all South African masons in order to make unity effective. In South Africa "there was a lamentable lack of those possessing private means and leisure as will enable them to devote all their time and attention" to masonic duties as Grand Lodge officers. The individual costs of supporting a Grand Lodge, its building and officers would be very high.¹²²

120. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 April, 1912, p. 34.

121. S.A. Masonic Journal, 31 May, 1912, C. Fred Silberbauer, p.7.

122. Ibid.

By June 1912, the S.A. Masonic Journal had collected 2000 signatures of masons supporting a United Grand Lodge for South Africa. These were to be put before delegates to a suggested unity conference at Bloemfontein in September.¹²³ However it was never held. Editor Deys persevered and announced a conference was planned for October the next year. That, too was not held.¹²⁴ Deys was reprimanded for his plebiscite by the District Grand Master for Natal, Wesley Francis, who told his lodge in March, 1912: "There has been for some time past talk of the establishment of a Grand Lodge for South Africa ... it appears to be more than anything else a newspaper proposition ... the mode of procedure, which the paper advocates, of a plebiscite among the brethren is not in accordance with the laws of the Craft".¹²⁵ He reminded masons of the "constitutional method of procedure" under Articles 218A and 218B of the Book of Constitutions. "There may be no harm done by this plebiscite action but it is probably useless", he added.¹²⁶

Pressure for an independent Grand Lodge was strongest in the heavily populated masonic district of the Transvaal. But it was for a United Grand Lodge of the Transvaal. In 1913, the English lodges in the Transvaal numbered 58 with 2516 members.¹²⁷ The Scottish Constitution in the Transvaal boasted 42 lodges with 2700 members and the Dutch Constitution 10 lodges with 459 members.¹²⁸

In comparison in that year English masons in the Western Cape numbered 1569 and 529 in the Central Division; 2432 in the

123. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 June, 1912, pp. 3 - 4

124. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 April, 1913, p. 12.

125. NEA DGL NATAL EC, Reports: Meeting, 30 March, 1912, Francis's report, pp. 6 - 7.

126. Ibid., p. 7.

127. TEA DGL TVL EC, Reports: Meeting, 27 April, 1914, pp. 41, 45.

128. TSA DGL TVL SC, Minute Book 22 June, 1912 - 11 December, 1926: Meeting, 28 June, 1913, p.8; DGL NC, Minute Book 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Meeting, 23 August, 1913, p. 119.

Eastern Division and 1634 in Natal.¹²⁹ The Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa (Transvaal excepted) claimed 1077 members.¹³⁰ The Scottish District Grand Lodge of the Western Province of the Cape Colony, inaugurated on 29 October, 1902, recorded about 300 and the Scottish Natal District Grand Lodge 962 in 1913.¹³¹

Those supporters of unity dwelling in the Transvaal, the strongest masonic division numerically, felt they had better standing in their call for change which first necessitated a United Grand Lodge for the Transvaal.

Eventually the masonic authorities bowed to pressure. An English Lodge, Star of the North, consecrated at Pietersburg in 1896, submitted a letter to the District Grand Lodge, Transvaal, calling for the formation of a sovereign Grand Lodge. Meeting in Pretoria on 30 October, 1913, the District Grand Lodge considered the letter and decided the lodge had acted in contravention of the by-laws.¹³² However the District Grand Master, C. Aburrow, said he believed Star of the North had committed this breach of the regulations unintentionally. "He had no desire to be harsh to them but this lodge would be written to and requested to act in a constitutional manner and if they did so he would readily give the necessary permission to discuss the matter".¹³³ Aburrow revealed that he had given permission already to another undisclosed lodge to discuss the issue.¹³⁴

129. PMC DGL WD EC, Returns: 1913; KEA DGL CD EC, Returns: 1913; DGL ED EC, Returns: 1913; NEA DGL NATAL EC, Returns: 1913.

130. CA Unlisted PGL (TVL Excepted) NC, Reports: Returns, 1913.

131. DGL WP SC, Minute Book, 16 September, 1901 - 26 July, 1915: Meeting, 4 May, 1914, Returns 1913; DGL NATAL SC, Returns: 1913.

132. TEA DGL TVL EC, Reports: Meeting 30 October, 1913, p.9.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid., p. 10.

He went further the next year when his District Grand Lodge, meeting in April, 1914, considered a motion from Star of the North Lodge: "That it is desirable that a sovereign Grand Lodge be constituted and that the time is ripe for such a step".¹³⁵ Aburrow revealed he had written to the Grand Secretary in London and had been told he, as District Grand Master, had the power to grant or refuse a dispensation to hold a special meeting of District Grand Lodge to consider the question. He was prepared to allow such a meeting.¹³⁶ Eventually the District Grand Lodge resolved to ask him to grant a dispensation to hold a special meeting to "consider the advisability or not of forming a sovereign Grand Lodge in the Transvaal or South Africa". Aburrow announced his intention to hold the special meeting in Johannesburg within four months.¹³⁷ But at the time the meeting was held - on 31 August, 1914, those attending thought more of the war that had broken out earlier that month and another resolution was added to the agenda - to consider opening a fund to give assistance to masons in Britain "in order to alleviate any distress likely to occur during the regrettable war now being waged".¹³⁸

Speaking to the main motion, the District Grand Master Aburrow said he had granted dispensation through a circular to all lodges who had applied to him for permission to discuss the Grand Lodge issue. Thirty-seven dispensations were issued to his lodges out of a total of 58. "Of 40 letters received, 36 lodges were opposed to the scheme and four lodges were in favour of the proposal", he revealed.¹³⁹ Undaunted, Bannatyre, a member of Star of the North Lodge said his lodge considered that a sovereign Grand Lodge "was the natural growth of masonry in this country". His lodge preferred a Grand Lodge for Transvaal only. "The case of Australia where

135. TEA DGL TVL EC, Reports: Meeting, 27 April, 1914, p.23.

136. Ibid., p. 24.

137. Ibid.

138. Ibid., Special meeting, 31 August, 1914, p. 7.

139. Ibid., p. 6.

practically every state had its own sovereign Grand Lodge was one whose example this District (Transvaal) might profitably follow". Canada was also cited as a colony in which the system of controlling their own masonic affairs had proved successful.¹⁴⁰

Despite his plea, the District Grand Lodge resolved overwhelmingly that it was against the proposal for the formation of a sovereign Grand Lodge for the Transvaal, with voting of 127 to seven. By 124 votes to eight it also rejected the proposal for a sovereign Grand Lodge for South Africa.¹⁴¹

Having buried this issue for the time, the lodge went on to more pressing matters, setting up a fund for the war distressed and expressing its "loyal patriotic and fraternal devotion to our King and Country".¹⁴² A sum of £500 was to be sent immediately to Grand Lodge for this purpose and a local war fund be opened up and lodges asked to contribute.¹⁴³

"Our Empire has been plunged into darkness and the shadow of death, into the vortex of a European conflict unprecedented in history", A.B. Gordon, District Grand Master of the English Eastern Division, told his lodge a month after war broke out. "The better and braver course is to seek consolation in the courage, the ready and undaunted response and, above all, the united front with which the British Empire stands prepared to meet the evil day".¹⁴⁴ Some £250 was sent off to London for the masonic war relief fund.¹⁴⁵

Without exception, Freemasons of all constitutions contributed men and money to the war effort. The movement for a sovereign Grand Lodge in South Africa disappeared for the time being.

140. TEA DGL TVL EC, Reports: Special meeting, 31 August, 1914, p.6.

141. Ibid., p. 7.

142. Ibid.

143. Ibid., p. 8.

144. DGL ED EC, Reports: Meeting, 9 September, 1914, Gordon's report, p. 7.

145. Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

DUTCH DISPUTES: 1882 - 1914

Because of squabbles with their masonic authorities in Holland and with each other, mainly over political and religious matters, Dutch Lodges in South Africa were unable to add significantly to the movement for a United Grand Lodge for South Africa in the pre-war years.

Yet they suffered perhaps more than their English counterparts from high-handed decrees from overseas. The first example was the statement by the then new Grand Master National, Prince Alexander of the Netherlands, during his election address in 1882 when he hinted that it was necessary that Freemasons should take an active part in the political affairs of their countries.

This was resented by the Provincial Grand Lodge in South Africa which decided that year, while at the same time congratulating the Prince on his appointment, to point out that social, religious and political discussions were not allowed in a lodge and that the Prince had gone against the principles and teachings of Freemasonry. To allow social, religious or political discussions and thus to make Freemasonry a political force, would create discord in the Craft in South Africa.¹

If the Prince's remarks had been obeyed, the Dutch lodges in South Africa would have virtually disappeared, for members felt strongly in this matter preferring to keep out of the political turmoil in the country after the first war of independence.² Every mason then, as now, took an oath to abstain from such discussion in their lodges.

1. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: 31 March, 1882, p. 3.

2. Ibid.

Holland was again to blame for a division in South Africa among members of the Rose Croix degree, a so-called higher degree open only to attested Christians acknowledging the Trinity.

The Supreme Grand Chapter of the Netherlands governing Rose Croix chapters in South Africa brought into force a new ritual which, said members of De Goede Hoop Chapter, was "utterly devoid of the ancient landmarks of the Order of Freemasonry and with all religious dogmas having been excluded, therefore cannot be accepted by this chapter".³

The chapter then severed its connection with the Supreme Grand Chapter in Holland and immediately set up its own Supreme Grand Chapter on 12 April, 1886. J. de V. Heckroodt, appointed head of the breakaway Grand Chapter of South Africa, told Holland that "the Zodiac or some other thing (had been) substituted for the Trinity". The divinity of Christ must be acknowledged as it was before in the ritual.⁴ The rebel Grand Chapter defiantly issued a warrant of authority to Chapter De Goede Trouw in Cape Town.⁵

The revolt only involved a handful of Rose Croix masons but its reverberations spread through Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa. In conciliation, the rebels offered to dissolve their Grand Chapter provided the old ritual was restored. However they found themselves barred not only

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3. CA Unlisted High Degrees, De Goede Hoop Chapter, Letters Received, 1880 - 1885: Supreme Grand Chapter re Supreme Grand Chapter of S.A., 3 December, 1884, 6 December, 1884, 26 February, 1886, 17 March, 1886; De Goede Hoop Chapter Minutes, 1885 - 1886: 17 March, 1886.
 4. CA Unlisted Deputy Grand Chancellor High Degrees, Correspondence, 1885 - 1898: Supreme Grand Chapter of Holland, Memorandum re Supreme Grand Chapter of S.A., Heckroodt - Holland, 1 January, 1890, p. 11.
 5. Ibid., Supreme Grand Chapter S.A. - Supreme Grand Chapter Holland, 18 July, 1890, p. 26.

from Rose Croix Chapters in South Africa and overseas but also from Craft lodges.⁶ Eventually, without a conciliatory word from Holland, they offered to dissolve the two chapters and seek re-admission.⁷ The local head of the recognised Chapters, Deputy Grand Chancellor of the High Degrees, H.W. Dieperink, who was installed in 1893, did little to ease the conflict, insisting that certain key rebels should be made to resign. Angered, the members of the illegal De Goede Trouw Chapter refused to obey and also refused to hand over the Chapter's belongings and papers after several stormy meetings with Dieperink. The controversy eventually was resolved some years later by the dissolution and reconstitution of the erring Chapters.⁸

It was overshadowed by an even more serious dispute within the Craft which again hinged on religious interpretations. On the death of the Deputy Grand Master of the Dutch Craft lodges, J.H. Hofmeyr, on 14 September, 1892, the Provincial Grand Mastership - the office immediately below that of Deputy Grand Master in South Africa - was held by the Rev. David Pieter Faure, who had been a Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church but, after a doctrinal dispute with the Synod, had left the ministry to become a journalist and later founder minister of the Free Protestant Church. A modernist in religion, Faure had run full tilt against the N.G. Kerk, protagonist of the traditional church doctrines.⁹

In a series of articles in The Cape Argus on the Truth about

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6. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Minute Book, 5 August, 1885 - 10 February, 1892: Meeting, 7 August, 1889.
 7. CA Unlisted Deputy Grand Chancellor High Degrees Correspondence, 1885 - 1898: Supreme Grand Chapter S.A. - Supreme Grand Chapter Holland, 21 August, 1889, p.9.
 8. CA Unlisted Deputy Grand Chancellor High Degrees Correspondence, 1892 - 1904: Dieperink - C.C.Silberbauer, 20 February, 1898.
 9. DSAB IV, p. 153 (H.C. Hopkins: D.P. Faure); C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in S.A., pp. 12 - 13.

The Bible, Faure 'threw out what were dangerous views at the time. He questioned the infalliability of the English Bible because of its many translations, he queried the validity of parts of the New Testament passing through the hands of generations of copyists, he pointed to inaccuracies in fact and the often cruel teachings in the Old Testament. Men should not be tied to a Hebrew Bible but write a modern one based on modern truths, he told readers of The Cape Argus.¹⁰

These arguments were understood by some as showing a disbelief in The Bible. A belief in The Bible or a similar Holy Work is a necessary attribute for a person to become a Freemason. Faure was then regarded by orthodox masons as a heretic for denying the "divine inspiration" of The Bible and unfit to fill Hofmeyr's place as a leader of Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa. Furthermore, Faure as a relatively young mason, had not aspired to join the so-called High Degrees, and thus could not hold - as his predecessors Brand and Hofmeyr had done - the office of Deputy Grand Chancellor of the High Degrees simultaneously with that of Deputy Grand Master of the Craft degrees. Many masons favoured the appointment of Dieperink "recognised as the most erudite scholar in the country", to hold both positions.¹¹

The senior lodge, De Goede Hoop, supported Dieperink at first but another contender emerged - the Master of De Goede Hoop, O.D. Douallier, who attempted to strengthen his claim to high office by having published in The Cape Argus his personal declaration that The Bible was the "Great Light in Freemasonry" which, by implication, damaged Faure.¹²

The Grand East in Holland finally accepted the recommendation

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10. D.P. Faure: Truth about The Bible, Discourses delivered in Free Protestant Church, Cape Town, Reprinted from The Cape Argus, Nos. 1,2,3 and 8.
 11. C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in S.A., p. 12; S.A. Freemason, 11 May, 1893: Correspondence, pp. 249 - 250.
 12. The Cape Argus, 5 November, 1892: "Freemasons and The Bible".

from the Provincial Grand Lodge that Faure be appointed Deputy Grand Master of the Craft. As Provincial Grand Master, Faure had had to submit through his Provincial Grand Lodge the name of a successor to Hofmeyr. There was only one candidate for the office, Dr. Dieperink. This was not to Faure's taste. "If there was one man in the Order thoroughly disloyal to the Grand East of the Netherlands it was the only candidate for the office of Deputy Grand Master - Dr. H. Dieperink", Faure later wrote in his memoirs.¹³ Dieperink, he disclosed, had been deeply critical in public of Holland's edicts and this occasioned Faure to put his own name forward as a candidate.¹⁴

In January, 1893, Dieperink was appointed head of the Higher Degrees and Faure was given control of the Craft degrees, a compromise by Holland to try to ease the rift among Dutch Masons.¹⁵

Armed now with authority, Faure turned to attack his critics who by now had multiplied. Lodges De Goede Trouw and De Goede Hoop had canvassed other Dutch lodges to whip up opinion against Faure. "Deep offence has been given to a large majority of Freemasons in South Africa working under the jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands by the appointment of R.W.Bro. D.P. Faure as Deputy Grand Master for South Africa", Lodge De Goede Trouw wrote in a circular to all Dutch lodges, urging them to cooperate with it to endeavour to persuade Faure to resign "as his continuance in office can only result in division and schism" and to send representatives to a conference on 9 March, 1893

13. D.P. Faure: My Life and Times, p. 116.

14. Ibid.

15. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Correspondence 1892 - 1893: Holland circular, 23 January, 1893.

in Cape Town to discuss the matter. The circular added that 10 lodges supported Dieperink as Deputy Grand Master and only 2 for Faure while 3 expressed no opinion.¹⁶ De Goede Trouw's Master, C. Matthews, said his lodge was determined not to submit to Faure.¹⁷

Undaunted, Faure had a lengthy reply to De Goede Trouw printed and circularised. In it he claimed the lodge had misrepresented the position to the 10 Dutch lodges by telling them it was necessary for them to vote for a Brother who could act both as head of the Craft and of the Higher degrees. For the lodges to query a decision of the Grand East was an act of disloyalty; to claim he had illegally put forward his own nomination to Holland was an insult. He warned De Goede Trouw not to persist in holding the meeting on 9 March.¹⁸

Faure also retaliated swiftly to rebut charges of hereticism following his articles in The Cape Argus on The Truth About The Bible. Again distributing printed circulars to all Dutch lodges, he replied to his critics about his belief in The Bible. As Master of Lodge De Goede Hoop, O.D. Douallier wrote to him in February, 1893 to inquire if Faure recognised The Bible: "In order ... to allay much unhappiness and painful irritation among the Brethren may I ask you to be so good as to favour me and the Lodge with an expression of your views concerning the Bible as being the 'First Great Light of Freemasonry'. I shall also be glad if you will let me know whether in

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16. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Correspondence 1892 - 1893: Circular, 1 February, 1893.
 17. CA Unlisted Deputy Grand Chancellor High Degrees Correspondence, 1892 - 1904: Matthews - Dieperink, 13 February, 1893.
 18. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Correspondence, 1892 - 1893: Faure's circular to De Goede Trouw, 28 February, 1893.

view of the opinions repeatedly expressed by you in reference to the Bible, you will adhere to the usage of administering or taking the obligation on the volume of the Sacred Law".¹⁹

Douallier's query was published in the circular with Faure's lengthy reply. Douallier's theological views did not agree with his, he said, but he felt Douallier had not "grasped the spirit of Freemasonry, the characteristic feature of which is that it judges men not by their theological opinions but by their personal character".²⁰ Faure wrote he never attacked the Bible but only certain theories held by men concerning the Bible. He declared

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19. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 2 March, 1892 - 22 June, 1895: Faure's Circular, 23 February, 1893, p.1; Masonic Ritual.
 20. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 2 March, 1892 - 22 June, 1895: Faure's circular, 23 February, 1893, p.1; D. Knoop and G.P. Jones: Freemasonry and the Idea of Natural Religion Ars Quatuor Coronati (Pamphlet 1942), p. 353. They write: "No specifically Christian belief was made obligatory by the first charge" of a freemason as specified in Dr. James Anderson's 1723 Constitutions of Freemasonry. The First Charge "Concerning God and Religion" reads: "A mason is obliged by his tenure, to obey the Moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine ... 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves; that is, to be good men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd". In the Sixth Charge "Concerning Politics and Religion", Anderson wrote: "Our Politics is merely to be honest and our Religion the Law of Nature and to love God above all things and our Neighbour as ourself; this is the true primitive, catholic and universal Religion, agreed to be so in all Times and Ages".

it contained "all our Masonic doctrines and inculcates all masonic virtues and duties. It was the first great light of Freemasonry" and he would never prohibit its use in Lodges.²¹

Perhaps the destruction by fire of most of the temple of De Goede Hoop Lodge in Cape Town on 21 February, 1892, was the biggest advantage Faure received in these difficult times for the disaster and the rebuilding of the temple quietened the religious controversy. By 27 April, 1893, the temple had been restored to act as a venue for the installation of Faure as Deputy Grand Master of the Netherlands Constitution in South Africa.²²

The euphoria about the re-opened temple and the large numbers of masons present and official recognition by sister constitutions, gave him a favourable opportunity to answer his critics, which he did with conviction.²³ In his lengthy address he recalled that, because of a difference of opinion over his appointment, attempts were made to stir up prejudice against him on account of his theological opinions. "It became duty on my part not to give way".²⁴ Those who opposed him were those who forced him not to retire. It was his duty to stand for liberty of conscience in the masonic world "where religious intolerance is so singularly and so entirely out of place".²⁵

21. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 1892 - 1895: Faure's circular, 23 February, 1893, p.2.

22. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 2 March, 1892 - 22 June, 1895: Meeting, 27 April, 1893; The Cape Argus, 28 April, 1893: Masonry in South Africa.

23. Ibid., Faure's address, pp. 142 - 144; PMC DGL WD EC Minute Book 20 July, 1891 - 14 April, 1903: Meeting, 18 February, 1893, District Grand Lodge recognition of Faure.

24. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 2 March, 1892 - 22 June, 1895: Meeting, 27 April, 1893, Faure's address p. 142.

25. Ibid.

He pointed out in his address that religion was not mentioned in the Netherlandic Constitution's General Laws. A mason must believe in the "Architect of Heaven and Earth" but never discuss religion in the lodge. Theological opinions should be ignored particularly as Freemasonry embraced such religious followers as Mohammedans, Jews and Christians of all sects. The strength of the Craft depended upon its ability to include all manner of religions, where men "could work for the welfare of humanity and for the development of their own moral and spiritual powers recognising only the common bond of humanity".²⁶ The Craft had everything to do with religion - "the recognition of our relation to God and of the duties we owe to Him" - and nothing to do with theology "which is our conception of God ... a product of our own brain".²⁷ He had been faithful to the Masonic precepts that recognise the existence of God, that teach that men should love their fellowmen and that the soul of man is immortal.²⁸

The question of religious interpretations arose again when a mason, Wagner, was elected junior warden of the Dutch Lodge Star of Africa at Jagersfontein and objections were made on the grounds he was a selfconfessed agnostic. Addressing his Provincial Grand Lodge in August, 1894, Faure declared the objections were invalid. Wagner claimed to believe in "an Infinite Power ruling the Universe", sufficient to allow him to become a mason. "There is a spirit abroad in some quarters", added Faure, "which is as un-masonic as it is anti-masonic. It is the hydra of

26. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 2 March, 1892 - 22 June, 1895: Meeting, 27 April, 1893, Faure's address, p. 142.

27. Ibid., p. 143.

28. Ibid.

religious intolerance which, if not eradicated and crushed in time, will prove a worm gnawing at the vitals of our Order". Freemasonry was above the "many little 'isms' which divide the Christian world. "Orthodoxy and heresy are to it non-existent".²⁹

But his enemies did not remain quiet for long, particularly H.W. Dieperink, Deputy Grand Chancellor of the so-called High Degrees. Still agitating to win Faure's position, Dieperink wrote a blistering attack on Faure in a Dutch masonic publication, Maçonniek Weekblad, on 14 October, 1895 alleging he was appointed illegally and criticising his weak opposition to new statutes introduced by Holland.³⁰ These removed payment for the last two of the three Craft degrees and, according to Lodge Unity of Winburg, would penalise Dutch lodges against their counterparts, the English, Irish and Scottish. Masons initiated in these constitutions, would then be able to obtain their last 2 degrees gratis in Dutch lodges.³¹

Faure called an extraordinary meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge on 29 November, 1895 to refute Dieperink's allegations. At this meeting, the first in its history, he summarised these allegations which included nepotism and refusal to allow the Transvaal lodges to have a Provincial Grand Lodge of their own. Dieperink, who represented several Transvaal lodges, claimed in the Dutch publication Faure was "hated by the whole Dutch Reformed clergy in South Africa", presumably because of his doctrinal

29. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1894, Faure's address, pp. 2 - 7.

30. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Extraordinary Meeting, 29 November, 1895, pp. 2 - 3.

31. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters 1893 - 1895: Circular, Lodge Winburg, 23 October, 1895.

dissertations some years previously. Painstakingly, Faure repudiated these charges, adding that he was on very friendly terms with the clergy.³²

"It is a real relief to me that this highly unpleasant task of exposing these mischievous misrepresentations is ended. When it is of the highest importance that the authorities and the Brethren in the Netherlands should have full confidence in the South African authorities, such unscrupulous attempts are made to raise their suspicions and make them believe that the affairs of Dutch Freemasonry in this area are in a thoroughly rotten condition. We here know such statements as I have referred to to be either prevarications or half-truths or untruths; we here can fathom the motives which urged their publication and we know the reason of the animus displayed".³³ He regretted Dieperink was not present.³⁴

Having disposed of his enemies, Faure turned to deal with Holland. He put forward a resolution, adopted by the meeting, warning Holland of the grave effects that would arise from the curtailing of the Deputy Grand Master's powers of dispensation under the proposed new statutes. Under them he would not be able to give dispensation to lodges over a variety of matters. This would be Holland's prerogative and local home rule would be thus curtailed.³⁵

The resolution pointed out that there were no grievances in lodges which all desired to continue to belong to the Order of the Netherlands but they might be forced to sever bonds if the new statutes were insisted upon. Already Lodge Jubilee of Barberton had withdrawn from the Dutch

32. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Extraordinary Meeting, 29 November, 1895, pp. 3 - 4.

33. Ibid., pp. 4 - 5.

34. Ibid., p. 5.

35. Ibid.

Constitution as a result and more might follow. Faure suggested a conference of lodges in the Republics to discuss the statutes.³⁶

These internal upheavals and dictatorial edicts from overseas strained local ties and created scattered support for a Dutch South African Grand Lodge. At a conference of five Transvaal lodges in Johannesburg on 9 October, 1896, called by Faure to consider the contentious new statutes, representatives appealed for consideration of a Grand Lodge for South Africa under the Netherlands Constitution if the statutes were not withdrawn.³⁷

The Provincial Grand Master, C.E. Lewis, who chaired the meeting, reported back to Cape Town that the Transvaal lodges felt that, unless their privileges now removed under the statutes were restored, they would indeed call for a conference to consider forming a separate Grand Lodge for South Africa, not merely for the Transvaal.³⁸

Lewis persuaded them not to pass a resolution to this effect but emphasised that these Transvaal lodges were seriously handicapped by the new statutes in relation to their masonic colleagues of other constitutions in the area and insisted that the Deputy Grand Master have full powers of dispensation to ignore the statutes if necessary.³⁹

Faure, armed with a protest petition against the statutes from ten Dutch lodges, made a final appeal to his Supreme Government in Holland which agreed to consider it at its meeting in June, 1897. Under his suggested amendment, all Dutch lodges outside Holland would be exempt from the

36. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC, Reports: Extraordinary Meeting, 29 November, 1895, p.5.

37. Ibid., Meeting, 27 August, 1897; Johannesburg Meeting, 9 October, 1896, pp. 12 - 13.

38. Ibid., Meeting, 27 August, 1897, Lewis's report, pp.14-15.

39. Ibid.

statutes. To ensure success, the Provincial Grand Lodge urged all lodges to appoint representatives with voting powers to the meeting in Holland and 17 lodges appointed 34 representatives, sufficient, it appears to persuade the Supreme Government to agree to the amendment and allow the Deputy Grand Master, now C.E. Lewis, to continue to act almost autonomously in South Africa.⁴⁰

Over the succeeding years Holland's proclamations on policy and laws continued to worry local lodges. Its hegemony eventually became the cause indirectly of the Dutch lodges breaking away to form the Southern African Grand Lodge in 1961.

Eventually the duties of the Deputy Grand Mastership were too exacting for a man of Bro. Faure's years. "The spirit was there but his physical strength was unequal to the strain", reported C.C. Silberbauer in 1932.⁴¹ Faure resigned in 1897 because of ill-health and his Provincial Grand Master, Charles Edwardes Lewis, a noted educationalist, was appointed in his stead. Lewis was as outspoken as his predecessor. On his installation he told the Provincial Grand Lodge on 18 June, 1897 that Faure, "apart from his masonic connection ... has secured the high esteem and warm regard of thoughtful men throughout South Africa as a man who has been content to suffer for conscience's sake; and this true martyr spirit, a high form - perhaps the highest form - of heroism, is one which should especially commend itself to us as Freemasons because we above all others should recognise the right of every earnest man to grow towards perfection in the way his conscience approves ... he was an eminent ruler of the Craft".⁴²

40. A 2263 Vol.16, PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 27 August, 1897, Lewis's report, pp. 18 - 24.

41. C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa, p. 13.

42. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC Report: Meeting, 27 August, 1897, Address by Lewis at installation 18 June, 1897.

Lewis, a classical scholar and educationalist, was professor at the S.A. College from 1879. As chairman of the Council he is known for his work in building up the college which later became the University of Cape Town. As recognition of his services he was awarded in 1929 an honorary doctorate of Laws.⁴³

One of his first tasks on taking office was to visit in June and July, 1898, the Dutch lodges in the Transvaal and Free State, most of which had not been attended since Brand's last visit there in 1869. A believer in Dutch masonic unity rather than inter-constitutional unity in South Africa, Lewis was able to quieten for a time those who clamoured for a separate Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in the north.⁴⁴

But his influence was mainly felt in education - in fostering the two education funds for the relief of children of masons or their widows.⁴⁵

In 1887, to commemorate the celebration of the Jubilee Year of Queen Victoria, lodges of the English, Scottish and Netherlandic Constitutions in South Africa established the Masonic Education Fund of South Africa. At the same time the Cape District Joint Benevolent Fund was established. Starting only in 1890, the Education Fund could report that, by 31 March, 1892, 14 boys and 3 girls were being helped. With fresh applications 25 children had been placed in various schools in Cape Town, Grahamstown, East London, Oudtshoorn and Camborne in Cornwall. Expenditure totalled

43. DSAB I, p. 473 (Dr. F. Smuts: C.E. Lewis).

44. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC Report: Meeting, 26 August, 1898, p. 20; C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa, p.14.

45. C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa, p. 14



The Earl of Carnarvon, Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, 1874 - 1890.



The Earl of Latham, Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, 1891 - 1898.



Sir Edward Letchworth, Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England, 1896 - 1916.



Professor C.E. Lewis, Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa, 1897 - 1904.

Cape Archives.

£205, leaving a balance of £201 to swell the capital account to £693. Thirty-four lodges of all constitutions contributed to the fund and vied with each other over the amounts donated.⁴⁶ As Lewis took over his new office in 1897, the Education Fund was aiding 55 children. With one exception all were orphans. Expenditure totalled £288. The fund had since 1890 helped 100 children receive education.⁴⁷ Lewis as chairman backed the appeal by the Fund to launch special celebrations to mark the "Record Reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen" (Queen Victoria's 60th year on the throne); a masonic service and thanksgiving was held on St. John's Day, 24 June, 1897, in St. George's Cathedral, Cape Town and on the same evening a joint masonic banquet took place. Some £500 was raised for the Masonic Education Fund.⁴⁸

Lewis was chairman of the fund for many years and at the same time chairman of the Education Fund of his own Lodge De Goede Hoop.⁴⁹

But the Second War of Independence (1899 - 1902), "with its dislocation of mundane and masonic affairs, not only increased his anxieties and responsibilities but effectually barred the way to the expansion of Netherlandic Freemasonry", writes Silberbauer.⁵⁰ An incident in that war eventually led to his resignation.

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- 46. CA Unlisted Masonic Education Fund: Report 1 April, 1892 - 30 June 1893.
 - 47. Ibid., Report 1 July, 1896 - 30 June, 1897.
 - 48. A 2263 Vol. 16, PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 27 August, 1897, Fund's Circular, pp. 27 - 29; The Cape Argus 24 June, 1897, p. 5; The Cape Argus, 26 June, 1897, p.5.
 - 49. C.C. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa, p. 14.
 - 50. Ibid.

John Mansfield, junior warden of Lodge De Goede Hoop in 1899, was called out for active service during the war with his regiment, the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles. A captain, he was appointed Commandant at Touws River and promoted to Major. In December 1901 he was found guilty by a Court Martial Board of "having committed certain irregularities in his capacity as Commandant at Touws River" and sentenced by the Board to a fine of £25 or, in default, imprisonment without hard labour for six months, and to be dismissed the service.⁵¹

A Cape Colonial Forces Order of 21 December, 1901 found he had been fraudulent, and had made false statements.⁵²

Only hearing of this early in 1902, his lodge asked Mansfield to attend a meeting of the Board of Management on 5 March, 1902 to inquire into his conviction. Mansfield failed to attend the meeting, apologising because his wife was ill and asking for the postponement of his case.⁵³

De Goede Hoop notified the Deputy Grand Master Lewis that a meeting of the Board of Management on 5 March, 1902 had, in accordance with lodge by-laws, refused to postpone the hearing and had suspended Mansfield for "unmasonic conduct".⁵⁴ On being told of his suspension, Mansfield pointed out he had been judged by the lodge without trial and notified his appeal to the Provincial Grand Lodge.⁵⁵ The masonic code of conduct in the Victorian era, as is the case today, refused to accept into a lodge masons convicted of criminal offences.

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51. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, Board's Report, 13 April, 1903 pp. 1 - 3.
 52. DDF/6/102 Cape Colonial Forces Order No. 410, 21 December, 1901.
 53. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters Received and Sent 1900 - 1902: De Goede Hoop - Mansfield, 1 March, 1902; Mansfield - De Goede Hoop, 5 March, 1902.
 54. Ibid., De Goede Hoop - DGMN, 7 March, 1902.
 55. CA 2263 Vol.14, PGL NC Correspondence General 1899 - 1903: Mansfield - PGL, 4 April, 1902.

Lewis, as Deputy Grand Master, appointed a Court of Appeal of masons to hear Mansfield's case and on 21 April, 1902 it heard the appeal and dismissed it after listening to a lengthy defence by Mr. Wilkinson, his advocate.⁵⁶

Mansfield had faced six charges, the court heard. The first alleged he had at Touws River "fraudently induced one Private Edwards of the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles to claim horse allowance" for a horse belonging to Mansfield and had fraudently certified on company paysheets that Edwards was entitled to these allowances which were drawn and kept by Mansfield. The second alleged he had made false statements and signed the pay sheets. Other charges referred to a Private Skeats who had also drawn illegal horse allowances for Mansfield's horse. His defence pointed out that the military had had use of the horse and should pay allowances for it.⁵⁷

Mansfield had claimed allowances for his own use of his horse but these were disallowed. Thereupon he had placed the horse on the Company's strength for the use of Edwards and Skeats and had retained the allowances, claiming the horse was used for the company only. Volunteers in the regiment had to provide their own horses. The allowance was 2s. a day per horse. It was alleged Mansfield had drawn this "illegal" allowance from November, 1900 to March, 1901 and from April, 1901 to August, 1901.⁵⁸

Another charge concerned the obtaining of supplies from other

56. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, Annexures 11, 12 and 13, pp. 15 - 30.

57. Ibid., Annexure No.11, pp. 15 - 16.

58. Ibid., p. 16.

sources rather than Cape Town headquarters. Defence pointed out that witnesses for the Crown at the Court Martial had admitted that the blocking of the railway line by the Boers had held up supplies from Cape Town. "It should not be forgotten that the Boers were in easy reach of Touws River. Captain Mansfield might at any time have been cut off from obtaining further supplies", said his defence, Mr. Wilkinson.⁵⁹ Mansfield had not only to supply his force - 800 men and animals - at Touws River but to supply about 1200 civilians for 3 months in advance at the town and also outlying stations and for "men and horses going up and down the line". It was sound judgement to ensure sufficient supplies from whatever source, claimed his defence.⁶⁰

On hearing of the decision of the Masonic Court to reject his appeal, Mansfield announced his intention to appeal to the Netherlands Supreme Government, while Lewis asked it for an opinion on the Mansfield case.⁶¹

The affair took a more serious turn when The Hague deemed itself incompetent to deal with the case, pointing out it was a matter of internal discipline but nevertheless it sent a hypothetical finding to Lewis arrived by it at its meeting on 15 June, 1902, on the matter.⁶² This differed from the views not only of Lodge De Goede Hoop but those of the Deputy Grand Master. The Grand East set out that it would be difficult to claim that Mansfield had attempted to enrich himself to the detriment of the State. It asked: "Does he have to be banished from his lodge for a military offence not proven?". It appealed for clemency.

59. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, Annexure 11, pp. 18 - 19.

60. Ibid., p. 19.

61. Ibid., Annexure No. 14, pp. 30 - 31, Lewis - Grand Master, 1 May, 1902.

62. Ibid., Annexure No. 16, pp. 31 - 32, Grand East Meeting 15 June, 1902.

"The Supreme Government cannot believe that the free English nation should not, by the side of their respect for the sentence of a judge, also possess that humane sympathy which makes us hold out a helping and forgiving hand to any transgressor of the laws of the country who has not acted from vile greed or wickedness or, if so, shows himself penitent".⁶³

In a lengthy opinion, the Grand East decided that Mansfield's suspension be deferred and his case be retried by De Goede Hoop Lodge.⁶⁴

While this was the Grand East's opinion, it reiterated it was not competent to pronounce on the case -but it had and it caused an uproar in Dutch masonic circles in South Africa.⁶⁵

In a letter to the Grand Master at The Hague dated 3 September, 1902, the angry Deputy Grand Master Lewis revealed that Mansfield had written without his knowledge direct to Holland stating grounds for his appeal. Lewis had also sent papers marked "confidential" on the case to Holland.⁶⁶

At issue was Lewis's loyalty to Holland, he wrote in a memorandum. "It has pained me exceedingly to find that, when I acted as I fully believed and still believe from Masonic motives and in a masonic spirit, I have met with, not approbation, but indignation; not protection but open condemnation from the Grand East. The indignation of the Grand East at the action of myself and my colleagues has led them even to sit in judgement on the case while formally disclaiming their competence to decide it. Their

63. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, Annexure 16A, p. 35.

64. Ibid., Annexure 16A, pp. 31 - 39.

65. Ibid., p. 39.

66. Ibid., Annexure 17, pp. 39 - 41, Lewis - Grand Master, 3 September, 1902.

condemnation outweighs their formal expressions of continued confidence in myself".⁶⁷

A shaken Lewis then tendered his resignation as Deputy Grand Master.⁶⁸ Lodge De Goede Hoop refused to reconsider Mansfield's case, its special committee protesting that the Grand Lodge's opinion was antagonistic to the action taken by the lodge and "cast a slur on this lodge in the eyes of the masonic world".⁶⁹

Shocked by Lewis's offer of resignation, the Grand Master, G. van Visser, noted with grief his action but wrote a lengthy defence of Holland's opinion on the Mansfield case. Two principles were at stake ... "that the right of defence should be respected in the fullest sense and that a sentence passed by a profane judge, in itself without core, is not sufficient to compel the masonic judge also to thrust the person sentenced out of the masonic order".⁷⁰ Sentences passed at courts martial in time of war could not possibly be guaranteed to have been passed with a cool head as in peace time. "The British Government themselves have sent out a Commission to subject these sentences to a revision and have thereby given an example of wise and equitable management. And where the profane does such an act, the same freedom should indeed be given to the Freemason".⁷¹ All Holland had offered was "objective criticism" of Lewis's handling of the case. Commenting upon his resignation the Grand Master asked: "Where are we coming to if, every time whenever a higher authority, not even voluntarily, but forced by law, has to express an

67. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, Annexure 17, p. 40.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., Annexure 20A, pp. 45 - 46, De Goede Hoop - Lewis, 11 November, 1902.

70. Ibid., Annexure 21, p. 47, Visser - Lewis, 28 October, 1902.

71. Ibid.

opinion on a resolution of a lower authority does so in courteous manner ... this other authority thinks fit to tender its resignation because its views, after honest criticism, are not shared".⁷² He protested against Lewis's resignation and asked for its cancellation.⁷³ But Lewis replied that his decision was unalterable. It was not made out of personal pique as Holland had suggested but based on "considerations of principle and conviction".⁷⁴

His resignation had a ripple effect among members of the Dutch constitution in South Africa, many of whom had long felt dissatisfaction with decrees from Holland. At a special extraordinary meeting of the Board of Provincial Grand Lodge officers in Cape Town on 3 March, 1903, Lewis reiterated that his resignation, now accepted overseas, was over a matter of principle concerning Holland's handling of the Mansfield case. O.D. Douallier, his Provincial Grand Master, would act until a successor was appointed. Attempting to leave the meeting, he was stopped by assurances of support. Douallier then announced he could not act as Deputy Grand Master and also resigned as Provincial Grand Master, and one by one members of the Board of Appeal also resigned.⁷⁵

Then came the climax when, after several meetings protesting against Holland's interference, all the Provincial Grand Lodge officers resigned, leaving Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa without a head or executive body, in truth in "a chaotic state", as one delegate commented at the crucial meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge on 1 May, 1903.⁷⁶

72. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, Annexure 21, p. 48.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., Annexure 22, p. 49, Lewis - Visser, 15 December, 1902.

75. Ibid., Annexure 24, pp. 50 - 53, Minutes meeting 3 March, 1903.

76. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting 1 May, 1903, p. 16.

The unfortunate Mansfield had no relief even when, in 1906, the court martial proceedings against him were quashed, his fines returned, his arrears of pay made good and his captain's rank reinstated. He then asked De Goede Hoop for reconsideration of his suspension but, only after several meetings, did the lodge's Board of Management agree to lift his suspension. This did not automatically permit him to be reinstated as a member. Although he demanded to have lodge notices sent to him, the difficulty was only solved by his resignation in 1908.⁷⁷

The Grand Lodge moved swiftly, if uncautiously, to fill the void caused by the resignation of Lewis and the Provincial Grand Lodge officers. Its appointment of C.C. Silberbauer, a Cape Town lawyer, who became a member of the Cape Legislature representing Tembuland, however, only aggravated the growing antagonism many Dutch lodges in South Africa felt towards their Supreme Government. When it had been suggested at the special extraordinary meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge on 1 May, 1903, where Lewis and the other Provincial Grand Lodge officers announced their resignation, that Silberbauer should be appointed Deputy Grand Master, the masons present shouted "No, No, NO! NO!!"⁷⁸ This did not deter the Grand Lodge and, in August, 1903, Silberbauer announced his appointment as Deputy Grand Master and found himself facing heavy opposition from many lodges, principally the senior lodge, De Goede Hoop.⁷⁹

Lewis had suffered criticism, now it was Silberbauer's turn. The pro-Lewis clique, claiming local lodges should have

77. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 117.

78. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Special Extraordinary meeting, 1 May, 1903, p. 16.

79. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters Received and Sent, 1903 - 1904: Petition 16 June, 1903.

been able to nominate their new Deputy Grand Master, campaigned to unseat him. Led by W.H. Tiffany, the Provincial Grand Secretary and Secretary of Lodge De Goede Hoop, they refused to acknowledge Silberbauer in his new post, petitioning other lodges for their support.⁸⁰

In a letter to Tiffany, Silberbauer labelled him as the instigator of this rebellious movement. He disclosed that Tiffany had called a private meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge officers at Kamps Cafe, Cape Town, to persuade them not to recognise Silberbauer. "So far from addressing me in my official capacity, you addressed me as Deputy Grand Master designate. Not content with this rebellious disregard of constituted authority you proceeded to work up on the same lines other movements, both in the East, and in other centres where charters of this jurisdiction are existent, which charters might have been seriously endangered had you succeeded in your misguided endeavours".⁸¹ Silberbauer reminded Tiffany that he had threatened that, because of Silberbauer's appointment, many Dutch lodges would hand in their charters, opening the way for a Grand Lodge of South Africa.

"You have consistently adhered to a policy of not recognising my appointment, of aloofness, in fact I must say, of ostracism; while at the same time you have lost no opportunity of endeavouring to sow dissension in the ranks of the brethren by keeping alive the flames of the unfortunate controversy which raged round the circumstances attendant upon the resignation of R.W.B. Chas. E. Lewis".⁸²

His conduct had been reported to Holland and, until he acknowledged Silberbauer's position as Deputy Grand Master

80. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters Received and Sent, 1903 - 1904: Petition 16 June, 1903.

81. Ibid., Silberbauer - Tiffany, 3 November, 1903.

82. Ibid.

and apologised, he would be suspended.⁸³

Eventually Silberbauer summoned an extraordinary meeting on 4 March, 1904, of Provincial Grand Lodge officers who were acting temporarily after their resignations in 1903, and told them that his peacemaking efforts had been foiled. "Tiffany, 'Provincial Grand Secretary pro tem' has systematically ignored my position as Deputy Grand Master", he complained.⁸⁴ But other lodges were coming to his support, expressing their loyalty. Provincial Grand Lodge officers were finally officially elected at this meeting, giving Netherlands Freemasonry in South Africa a skeleton structure of authority.⁸⁵

Only in August 1904 did Silberbauer overcome opposition sufficiently to call another meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge and have himself installed as Deputy Grand Master. After that, he honoured his predecessors, Rev. D.P. Faure and C.E. Lewis, by installing them as Past Deputy Grand Masters despite a long speech by Lewis at De Goede Hoop Lodge in which Silberbauer was criticised for being at fault for not consulting with Lewis or the Provincial Grand Lodge before accepting his appointment. It was perhaps a regrettable oversight on Silberbauer's part which nevertheless had compromised the resignation of Lewis and the Provincial Grand Lodge on a matter of principle concerning the Mansfield case, added Lewis.⁸⁶

This dissension strengthened the separatist movement in the northern lodges for a Provincial Grand Lodge of their own.

83. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters Received and Sent, 1903 - 1904: Silberbauer - Tiffany, 3 November, 1903.

84. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Extraordinary meeting, 4 March, 1904, address by Silberbauer, p.3.

85. Ibid.

86. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Extraordinary meeting, 31 August, 1904, address by Lewis, pp. XI-XX; CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters Received 1903 - 1904: Lewis speech, 5 August, 1903.

Peace and Harmony, Kimberley, put several resolutions in August, 1904, to the Cape-based Provincial Grand Lodge regretting Lewis's resignation and the appointment of Silberbauer "at so unfavourable a juncture".⁸⁷

"Wiser policy would have been shown if the appointment had been deferred until such time as the differences in the Provincial Grand Lodge had been adjusted", it commented.⁸⁸ Further, "in view of the very unsatisfactory state of affairs, the lodge recommends that the Provincial Grand Lodge be abolished, each lodge communicating direct with the Supreme Government".⁸⁹ Finally, it felt the "time has now arrived to consider the question of forming a Grand Lodge for South Africa".⁹⁰

But the Provincial Grand Lodge Board warned Peace and Harmony not to become "involved in propositions not only in variance with its bounden duty to the Grand East but seriously calculated to jeopardise the existing relations existing between this Constitution and the sister constitutions of England, Scotland and Ireland".⁹¹

The Board noted at that meeting that five lodges - Orange at Rustenburg, Star of the Rand, Prins Frederick and Kaiser Frederick, all in Johannesburg, and Libertas at Krugersdorp - had petitioned for a Provincial Grand Lodge in the Transvaal while Lodge Broederband at Pretoria had "strongly counter-petitioned against separation".⁹²

87. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting 31 August, 1904, Appendix J, Board's report, p. 66.

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid., p. 67.

92. Ibid., Board's report, p. 27.

It noted that Lewis had visited the Transvaal lodges in 1898 and had pointed out the "very great inadvisability of taking any step now or in the future, which might weaken the tie of our own Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town and expressed the fear that any essential separation might seriously weaken Netherlandic Freemasonry in the Cape Colony itself".⁹³ Accordingly the establishment of a Provincial Grand Lodge in the Transvaal would weaken Netherlandic Freemasonry and the Provincial Grand Lodge while "for want of funds, administration would be practically impossible".⁹⁴ Instead the board put forward an "expansionist scheme" where the Provincial Grand Lodge would meet at various centres including Bloemfontein and Pretoria and more Provincial Grand Lodge officers would be appointed in the north.⁹⁵

But Silberbauer listened with more attention to the northern call and finally recommended to the Grand East of Holland that a separate Transvaal Provincial Grand Lodge was essential.⁹⁶ As a result, W.B.M. Vogts was installed as Provincial Grand Master of the new Provincial Grand Lodge in Johannesburg on 28 April, 1906.⁹⁷

For several years Dutch lodges had been concerned about proposed changes to the regulations governing the Order suggested by the Supreme Government in Holland. The status of a Master Mason was to be changed while the three

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- 93. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting 31 August, 1904, Board's report, p. 28.
 - 94. Ibid.
 - 95. Ibid., pp. 29- 33.
 - 96. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 30 August, 1905, p. 8.
 - 97. PGL TVL NC, Minute Book, 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Meeting, 28 April, 1906.

craft degrees could be granted at one meeting or within a year. Only after a Master Mason had proved himself to his lodge - and to Holland - of his masonic perseverance to study and to the ritual, would he be permitted to advance eventually to Master of a lodge.⁹⁸

De Goede Hoop led South African lodges in opposing these changes, particularly the proposal to change the system of granting degrees which, by custom, were given at intervals of at least six months if justified. This would, in their opinion, denigrate the Netherlandic lodges vis-a-vis their counterparts in the other constitutions. De Goede Hoop Lodge said that if this change were adopted:

"Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa would become an isolated body overnight as other constitutions would shun us".⁹⁹

South Africans heard with surprise in 1906 that their Supreme Government at The Hague had resigned en bloc through general opposition to its proposed changes, particularly over the proposal that the three craft degrees could be given at one meeting. Representatives of South African lodges at The Hague had on instruction voted against the proposals, Grand Master G. van Visser wrote to Silberbauer. "The Supreme Government found ... cause withdrawing all its contingent propositions and relinquishing office", he added.¹⁰⁰

He pointed out that the South African lodges had not met their current dues to the Grand Lodge and could have been

98. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Letters Received and Sent 1905 - 1906: DGMN Circular on proposed alterations to rituals and laws, 14 March, 1905, pp. 4 - 11.

99. CA Unlisted Lodge De Goede Hoop, Minute Book 24 June, 1905 - 9 September, 1908: Lodge - Grand East, 17 June, 1906.

100. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1906, Annexure No. 77 Grand East - DGM, 27 June, 1906, p. 22.

prohibited from voting at The Hague meeting. "A refusal to admit these lodges, although perfectly legal and justifiable, might have been capable of misinterpretation", particularly as it was known these lodges would vote against the proposals, he wrote.¹⁰¹

The Hague still persisted in its attempts at reform of the Craft, which attempts were again regarded as dangerous in the South African context by the South African Dutch lodges. In 1913 it issued further draft regulations. Article 2 read: "Freemasonry is the spirit born from an internal impulse, which manifests itself in a persistent reaching after development of all those spiritual and mental attributes, which can raise the individual and mankind to a higher spiritual and moral standard. It finds its application in the highest science of life, the Royal Art."¹⁰²

"The Order, forming part of the fraternity spread over the entire surface of the globe, aims at being the common centre for the practice of that science of life; it endeavours to promote the many-sided and harmonious development of the individual and of mankind.

"It accordingly assumes:

"A firm confidence in the reality of a spiritual and moral mundane Order which rules and impels the individual and all humanity, which confidence, without laying down any dogmatic views, it expresses by devoting itself and its labours to the Supreme Architect of the Universe;

"The worth of human personality and of the right of everyone

101. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1906, Annexure No. 77 Grand East - DGM, 27 June, 1906, p. 23.

102. CA2223 DGMN. Addendum 1/7 Regulations and Statutes 1837 - 1913: Draft Constitution and Regulations 1913.

to seek independently for truth, so that no man and no human community is entitled to declare its own views binding upon others;

"Man's moral responsibility for what he does and leaves undone;

"The equality of all man, the estimate of a man's worth depending only on his spiritual and mental characteristics;

"The universal brotherhood of man, involving the duty of every one, with personal devotion, to strive after increasing his own happiness, and that of others and of the community".¹⁰³

These esoteric instructions were acceptable in South Africa but other draft regulations were not, particularly those that suggested the creation of masonic associations rather than lodges and the overall right of The Hague to decide on new membership, new lodges and other routine matters.¹⁰⁴ These would have seriously weakened the authority of the South African Deputy Grand Master.

Dutch lodges sharply repudiated the 1913 draft Constitution and Regulations. Of particular importance to South Africa was the lack of emphasis in the suggested regulations on the necessity by a candidate to express a belief in God. Every candidate to Freemasonry must profess belief in a Supreme Being.¹⁰⁵

A committee of South African Provincial Grand Lodge officers appointed by Silberbauer to examine them reported in October 1913 in strong terms:

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103. A 2223 DGMN Addendum 1/7 Regulations and Statutes 1837 - 1913: Draft Constitutions and Regulations 1913.
104. Ibid.
105. Masonic Ritual.

"We desire at the outset to say that it cannot be too strongly impressed upon the Supreme Government and the Grand East that Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa exists under conditions such as, we believe, are found in no other area under their jurisdiction. Three Constitutions, in addition to our own, labour in South Africa, so that the Netherlandic Freemason who is for any reason dissatisfied with his own Constitution will have no difficulty in finding a new Masonic home.¹⁰⁶

"We desire further to express our opinion that the progress of the movement to place South Africa upon the same footing as the other great self-governing dependencies of Great Britain, by the formation of a United Grand Lodge here, has been mainly retarded by the loyalty to their own Constitution of the lodges working under the Grand East. If this obstacle were removed, there appears to be no reason to doubt that such a Grand Lodge would shortly come into being, and South Africa would be lost to Netherlandic Freemasonry.¹⁰⁷

"We emphasise these points because there is no doubt that for some time past a spirit of discontent has been manifest throughout the Province. Our BB, well informed as to conditions under which the Sister Constitutions labour, compare those with our own conditions - not always to the advantage of the latter. To this discontent is now added a grave uneasiness which is the direct result of the proposed new Constitution, with its revolutionary propaganda and its doctrinaire tendencies.¹⁰⁸

"Speaking frankly, we say the feeling is that there is

106. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 7 October, 1913, Annexure C, Board's Report, p. 1.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.

too much tinkering (to use a homely expression) with the Constitution. Reference to the Grand Statutes and Regulations show that these were amended in 1899, 1900, 1902, 1903, 1907 and 1908. On how many occasions has the Grand Lodge of England found it necessary during the past 15 years to amend its Book of Constitutions?", the committee wrote, emphasising that the time was not expedient for change.¹⁰⁹

Two years later, with the controversy still raging, Silberbauer told The Hague: "The most serious objections exist here to the draft of the constitution and some lodges have already notified their intention of surrendering their charters if it is passed".¹¹⁰

"There are complaints of unrest among the brethren. They are unable to attend the Grand East (at The Hague) to outvote the revised constitution because of the difficulties attendant on the selection of brethren to represent them in Holland. In other words I am once again faced with a crisis in the constitution".¹¹¹ He asked Holland not to apply the revised constitution to South Africa unless the majority of lodges in South Africa agreed to it in writing.¹¹²

The worried Silberbauer by 1913 ruled over 1510 Dutch masons in the whole of the country, with 1077 in the southern area.¹¹³

Eventually the new constitution came into force on 1 March, 1917,

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- 109. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 7 October, 1913, Annexure C, Board's Report, p.2.
 - 110. GEN Bulletin No. 16, 1915: Silberbauer - Grand East, 21 November, 1915.
 - 111. Ibid.
 - 112. Ibid.
 - 113. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 7 October, 1913, Silberbauer's report, p.XXIV.

but the Deputy Grand Master in South Africa was given power to exempt South African lodges from any laws that might prejudice them, thereby reiterating their autonomy while the new laws would not apply to South Africa during the war.¹¹⁴

The Supreme Government had already condescended to consider granting Netherlandic Freemasonry in South Africa "a most liberal measure of self-government".¹¹⁵ It was a step nearer the complete independence several lodges sought, but the final break took another 44 years when the Southern Africa Constitution was formed from Dutch lodges in 1961.

Typical of the criticism from individual lodges of edicts from The Hague in those years comes from Peace and Harmony, Kimberley. Its historian, Rogaly, aptly recorded: "Any feeling which may have been displayed by the lodge from time to time in no way arose from distrust of or disaffection for the Supreme Government. It has always been from a sense of dissatisfaction with some new order or other, most applicable perhaps to Europe, but not fitting in with the thoughts of many in our South African lodges".¹¹⁶

114. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 30 August, 1918, p.8.

115. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC, Reports: Meeting, 25 August, 1916, Board's Report, p. 5.

116. A. Rogaly: Peace and Harmony Lodge, (typewritten MSS), p. 11.

CHAPTER VII

EUPHORIA AND UNEASE 1908 - 1918

Whether or not they supported the movement for masonic independence, Freemasons in South Africa welcomed the fact of political union and the participants with fervour in the events of 1908 to 1910.

Some were over-optimistic: "If closer union is to become a reality on this sub-continent it will very materially be the result of Freemasonry", said a confident Wesley Francis, Deputy Grand Master of the English Natal Division.¹

The Second Cruiser Squadron of the British Atlantic visited Natal on the occasion of the opening of the National Convention in Durban on 12 October, 1908.² "The gallant officer in command, Rear Admiral Brother Sir Percy M. Scott, was the bearer of a special message from our Royal Brother and Gracious Sovereign King Edward to the South African statesmen there assembled under the Presidency of Right Worshipful Brother Sir John Henry De Villiers, a Past Provincial Grand Master" of the Netherlandic Constitution.³ When the ships - veritable floating masonic lodges, it appears - docked in Simon's Town, the English, Irish, Scottish and Dutch lodges in the city combined to give the naval masons aboard H.M.S. Good Hope, Antrim, Carnarvon and Devonshire a suitable reception with a masonic ceremony on 9 November at De Goede Hoop Temple, followed by a banquet attended by 300 masons, of whom one third were sailors.⁴

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1. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: 28 September, 1908, Francis's address, p. 65.
 2. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 27 August, 1909, Board's report, p. 29; C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 371 (S.B. Spies: Reconstruction and Unification).
 3. PMC PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting 27 August, 1909, Board's Report, p. 29.
 4. Ibid., pp. 29 - 30.

Enthusiasm for Union could go no further, it seemed, when a new Dutch lodge, United South Africa, was formed at Fauresmith on 24 August, 1910.⁵

But the death in 1910 of King Edward VII, Past Grand Master of English Freemasonry and "Protector of the Craft" since his accession to the Throne, overshadowed for a time masonic enthusiasm for political union. Memorial services were held in the main centres and lodges were placed in mourning.⁶

The Town Hall, Pietermaritzburg was the venue for Natal's masonic memorial service on 20 May, 1910, the day of the Royal funeral. "The Hall which was heavily draped in black and purple was laid out as a ceremonial lodge. Upon the mosaic floorcloth in the centre was placed a pall of purple velvet edged with white satin and tasselled at each corner. At the eastern end of the pall upon a velvet cushion stood a small Imperial Crown of gold and silver whilst at the western end was a larger representation of the Imperial Crown in purple velvet resting upon a square of fringed white satin. Between the crowns were set two swords in saltire. To the east, west and south of the pall stood candelabra draped with purple ribbon and white tasselled cords"The wreaths used during the long service were later placed in the grounds of the Houses of Parliament at the foot of the statue of Queen Victoria.⁸

At the combined masonic service in Johannesburg on 14 May, 1910,

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5. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 26 August, 1910, Silberbauer's address, p. xviii.
 6. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 24 April, 1911, Memorial Service Johannesburg, 14 May, 1910; NEA DGL EC: Memorial Service 20 May, 1910.
 7. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 20 May, 1910, Memorial Service, p. 45.
 8. Ibid., p. 67.

Deputy Grand Master of the Dutch lodges, C.C. Silberbauer, pointed out in a tribute: "Masons of the Netherlandic Constitution are no less loyal to the King and his memory. The Netherlandic Constitution is composed mainly of subjects of His late Majesty".⁹

Masonic meetings gave way to politics. The annual meeting of the English Eastern Division District Grand Lodge planned for 15 September, 1910 was postponed until 21 September because of the elections on that day for the first Union Parliament.¹⁰

The first parliamentary session of the Union of South Africa was formally opened by the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn on 4 November, 1910.¹¹ The visit of Connaught - Grand Master of English Freemasonry, gave an opportunity to local masons of all constitutions to present him with addresses of loyalty at a mass meeting in the Cape Town City Hall on 2 November. About 1250 were present.¹² In the same month Dutch lodges congratulated Lord De Villiers of Wynberg, a Past Provincial Grand Master, on his being made a baronet by King George V and being appointed the first Chief Justice of the Union.¹³

Though depression had rested heavily on the country in 1909, Union brought a measure of economic revival, again reflecting in a decrease in the number of masons suspended for non-payment of dues. The Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in the south reported only nine suspensions from March 1910 to

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9. PGL TVL NC: Memorial Service, 14 May, 1910, Silberbauer's Address, p. 8.
 10. DGL ED EC, Minute Book, 14 September, 1904 - 29 March, 1941: Meeting, 21 September, 1910, p. 20.
 11. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 382 (B.J. Liebenberg: Union of S.A. up to Statute of Westminster 1910 - 1931).
 12. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 25 August, 1911, pp. 27 - 29.
 13. Ibid., pp. 30 - 31.

February 1911 against 35 the year before out of a membership of 974 in 22 active lodges.¹⁴ The number of suspended members dropped from 285 in 1909 to 170 in 1912 in the Western Cape division of English Freemasonry, from 19.76 per cent to 11.36 per cent of total membership.¹⁵ In the Eastern Cape, the number of English masons in arrears fell from 360 in 1909 to 293 in 1913.¹⁶

It was a shortlived recovery. Outside events made a deep impression on the workings of the Craft in 1913. A miners' dispute with mineowners at Kleinfontein, Benoni spread across the Witwatersrand by June, 1913. Strikes gave way to riots and Smuts, Minister of the Interior, Mines and Defence, had to accede to the miners' demands, realising he did not have enough force to quell the disturbances.¹⁷ Masonic leaders condemned the violence: "It is a social upheaval", said B.M. Vogts, Provincial Grand Master for Dutch lodges in the Transvaal in August.¹⁸ "Our own ranks no doubt hold many of the elements drawn forcibly into the vortex of the dread consummation of adjustment of classes and attempted realisation of emancipation of workers and securing of seemingly impossible reforms. We have seen the impossible occur, licentious riot take possession of our city (Johannesburg) and finally blood red human blood paid the bill of the outragers. It was an outrageous orgy of excesses".¹⁹

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14. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC Reports: Meetings, 25 and 26 August, 1911, Board's report, pp. 20 - 22.
 15. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1920, Comparative summaries, pp. 20 - 21.
 16. DGL ED EC Reports: Returns 1909, 1913.
 17. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 386 - 387 (B.J. Liebenberg: Union of S.A. up to Statute of Westminster 1910 - 1931)
 18. PGL TVL NC, Minute Book, 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Meeting, 23 August, 1913, Vogts' address, p. 154.
 19. Ibid.

"When feelings were at their highest, it was mooted that masonic heads of the Province should make an appeal to brethren to keep cool and stem the tide of the onrushing calamity wherever they could make their influence felt or voices heard. It was then agreed the time for such an appeal was not propitious. Not only a mason cannot possibly associate himself with the ways and means adopted in the recent strike, but it is his bounden duty to assuage, to pacify and advocate constitutional means of obtaining redress of would-be grievances".²⁰

He and his colleague, C. Aburrow, head of the English lodges in the Transvaal, referred to meetings between heads of masonic constitutions in the Transvaal in June and August, 1913 "when matters affecting social relations were discussed".²¹ Aburrow was then leading the most populous masonic district in the country with 58 lodges and 2516 members in good standing.²² He referred to the industrial situation which, since the Benoni strike, had deteriorated.

In January, 1914 another strike broke out, spreading to railway workers in Pretoria and to gold miners on the Witwatersrand. A general strike was called by the Federation of Trades. Smuts mobilised units of the new S.A. Defence Force and sent them into Johannesburg and the strikers capitulated.²³ "Having regard to the industrial upheaval not only in the Transvaal but to a certain extent throughout South Africa and the depression which inevitably succeeds

20. PGL TVL EC, Minute Book, 23 April, 1906 - 27 August, 1932: Meeting, 23 August, 1913, Vogts' address, p. 155.

21. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 27 April, 1914, Aburrow's address, p. 20.

22. Ibid., Board's report, pp. 41 and 45.

23. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 386 - 387 (B.J. Liebenberg: Union of S.A. up to Statute of Westminster 1910 - 1931).

such a crisis as we have experienced, the result of our (masonic) year's work may be considered to be satisfactory", said Aburrow.²⁴

In the emergency in 1913 Smuts had called up some 60,000 men for service.²⁵ Consequently attendances at lodges fell, but not as dramatically as they were to do in the following year when on 4 August, Britain and its Empire declared war on Germany and her Allies. This clash between the Great Powers was seen by some ardent republicans as an opportunity to regain by force independence of the Transvaal and Free State. This move towards open rebellion was accelerated by the Union Parliament's decision to comply with a request from the British Government in September, 1914 to attack German South West Africa, while the Government's call-up of civilians also proved unpopular.²⁶

On 18 September, about 1800 South African Active Citizen troops landed at Lüderitzbucht in German South West Africa, and another contingent landed at Port Nolloth and advanced to the Orange River.²⁷

Dissatisfaction, particularly in the south western Transvaal, grew as Generals Botha and Smuts sought to justify the attack on German territory by claiming the Union was under threat from a German invasion. Aggravating the uneasy situation was the treasonable activities of Lt. Col. S.G. Maritz in command of 1000 mounted troopers, who was

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24. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 27 April, 1914, Aburrow's address, p. 19.
 25. E.A. Walker: History of South Africa, pp. 554 - 555.
 26. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, p. 388 (B.J. Liebenberg: Union of S.A. up to Statute of Westminster, 1910 - 1931)
 27. SRP 1/2/1/1 UG 42,46: Commission into Rebellion in South Africa, December, 1916, pp. 3 - 5; SESA 11, pp. 508 - 509 (J.A. Agar-Hamilton: World War II, S.A. Participation in.)

stationed in the Upington district near the border of German South West Africa. After negotiations with the German Governor he had gone over to the Germans, taking about 500 men with him after refusing orders from Smuts to come to Pretoria.²⁸

The Government eventually had to declare martial law throughout the country. Others who opposed the Government policy, including Gen. C.F. Beyers, recently resigned Commandant General of the Defence Force, and Generals C.R. de Wet and Jan Kemp, decided after a meeting on 13 October to send a deputation to the Prime Minister. Nothing came of the meeting and eventually the tension sparked off open rebellion. Some of the burghers conscripted to defeat Maritz mutinied and joined Beyers in the Magaliesberg area, while De Wet toured the Free State addressing meetings, calling on people not to support the Government's invasion of South West Africa. General Kemp had taken over a band of armed men, stopping trains and requisitioning men and materials.

Despite the defeat of Beyers and his force by Government troops, De Wet rallied commandos in the Free State, intending to lead them to German South West Africa to join Maritz.²⁹ After several skirmishes Government forces dispersed his commandos at Virginia on 10 November. De Wet was captured on 1 December at Waterberg in the Bechuanaland border. Beyers was drowned in the River Vaal, attempting to cross it to evade capture, and by the middle of December the rebellion had been suppressed. However, Kemp had reached the German border and joined Maritz. On 16 December, then called Dingaan's Day, these two leaders, then operating from German South West Africa, proclaimed South Africa an independent republic. Together they

28. SRP 1/2/1/1 UG 42, 46: Commission into Rebellion in South Africa, December 1916, pp. 12, 20, 21.

29. SESA 9, pp. 258 - 260 (G.D. Scholtz: Rebellion 1914 - 1915).

launched an unsuccessful attack on Upington on 24 January, 1915. Kemp and his men surrendered while Maritz and a few supporters fled to Angola.³⁰

The significance of the rebellion made itself felt in masonic lodges where, despite the cardinal injunction not to discuss politics or religion, there was unease between English and Afrikaner masons.

In 1913 the Netherlands Deputy Grand Master, C.C.Silberbauer, had reported that both the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodges - that with authority in the Transvaal and that with authority in the remainder of South Africa - had a total membership of 1510, with 1077 in the South.³¹ Yet his Board of Provincial Grand Lodge officers in August, 1915, had to report that many lodges were now in financial trouble. "Many lodges will be unable to meet their obligations to the Grand East (in the Netherlands) and to this Provincial Grand Lodge. The recent rebellion, operations in Damaraland and dislocation of business consequent on the war, especially in mining centres, have resulted in the temporary cessation of masonic activities in some instances and consequent embarrassment in finances of the lodges affected".³² Several lodges have had to close as members joined the defence forces.

Freemasonry was not allowed to take root in the contentious territory of South West Africa either. The same Board of Provincial Grand Lodge officers reported that the Supreme Government in Holland had refused to grant a charter

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30. SESA 9, pp. 258 - 260 (G.D. Scholtz: Rebellion 1914 - 1915)
31. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 7 October, 1913, Silberbauer's Report, p.xxiv.
32. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 7 August, 1915, Board's Report, p. 13.

submitted through it from a proposed lodge, De Goede Hoop Zuidwest at Keetmanshoop, as the territory was still enemy territory and not formally annexed to the British Empire.³³

An unsuccessful attempt was made in 1914 to establish a field or travelling lodge in South West Africa. A mason, G.A. Adam, on active service in the territory, applied to the Scottish District Grand Lodge in the Transvaal on behalf of a number of masons for permission for this lodge, claiming that masons belonging to the Grand Lodge of Hamburg in German South West Africa were willing to co-operate. Regretfully permission was declined as the territory was outside the geographical area of the Scottish District Grand Lodge.³⁴

Perhaps some of these German masons were members of Lodge Zur Hoffnung at Swakopmund, founded on 4 August, 1908, under the Grand Lodge of Hamburg. When Swakopmund was bombarded on 14 September, 1914 by a British warship, many people were evacuated to the interior, mainly to Omaruru, and, on 25 September, seven lodge members met for the last time to lock up the temple. They forgot to store away the lodge's charter and minute books. On their return in August, 1915, they found the temple in ruins, perhaps the only masonic building destroyed by "enemy action" in Southern Africa during the first World War. However they met in a member's house until at the end of war they bought the same house and renovated it for use as a temple.³⁵

The English District Grand Lodge in the Eastern Province

33. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 25 August, 1916, pp. 6 - 7.

34. TSA DGL TVL SC Reports: Meeting, 21 December, 1914, p.6.

35. Anonymous: History Lodge Hoffnung, (typed), p. 1.

had to change its venue for its annual meeting as a result of unrest in the Free State following the unsuccessful rebellion. As some of its 47 lodges were in that area, the District Grand Lodge had alternated its venue for its meetings, choosing a city either in the Eastern Province or the Free State. It was to meet in 1915 in Bloemfontein, but District Grand Master, A.B. Gordon told it in Port Elizabeth on 8 September, 1915: "Things in South Africa move very swiftly and no one would have thought then (in 1914) what the position in this - what should be - bright land of ours would be today. I happened to be in the Orange Free State and Bloemfontein on my ordinary business in May and June last and from what I saw and heard I considered it would be inadvisable to meet there this year. I need say nothing more about this matter - I think you can read between the lines".³⁶ He did not elucidate but he may refer to the aftermath of the attack on Upington by Kemp and Maritz in the last action of the rebellion on 24 January, 1915 and the subsequent public agitation in Pretoria and other Transvaal and Free State cities for the release of General De Wet, who had been captured the previous December, and other rebels. Perhaps Gordon felt it would not be wise for a group of English Freemasons to meet in Bloemfontein at a time when, as G.D. Scholtz comments, national feeling among Afrikaners had been strengthened by the rebellion.³⁷

Loyalty to the British Empire was reflected in speeches by Masonic leaders at the outbreak of the war. District Grand Master of the English Eastern Division, A.B. Gordon, set the tone: "Our Empire has been plunged ... into darkness and the shadow of death; into the vortex of a European conflict unprecedented in history ... The better and braver course is to seek consolation in the courage, the ready and

36. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 8 September, 1915, p.9.

37. SESA 9, p.260 (G.D. Scholtz: Rebellion 1914 - 1915).

undaunted response and, above all, the united front with which the British Empire stands prepared to meet the evil days".³⁸

District Grand Master of the Mark Master Masons in the Western Province, Lt. Col. W. Stanford, said: "In the present war many of us have lost or have had wounded relatives or friends but we know and feel that they knew, or know that they fell or have been wounded, in a glorious cause, in the cause of an Empire fighting for the rights of man, the rights of Brotherhood, the rights of freedom ... in fine ...for the very principles of Freemasonry".³⁹

Lodges continued to feel the loss of members as the war progressed. "There has been an enormous falling off in numbers", reported the Provincial Board to the Provincial Grand Lodge in the Transvaal.⁴⁰ Membership dropped from 423 in 1913 to 297 in 1918.⁴¹

"Owing to the war and the disturbed state of the country, lodges have almost ceased to work. Many of the officers and members are away on active service or on garrison duty", reported the Board of General Purposes to the English District Grand Lodge of the Central Division, meeting at Kimberley in 1915.⁴²

Natal District of the English Constitution recorded 1630

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- 38. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 9 September, 1914, Gordon's address, p. 7.
 - 39. PMC DGL Mark Master Masons, Western Division Reports: Meeting, 5 August, 1916, Stanford's address, p. 8.
 - 40. PGL TVL NC Reports: Meeting, 29 August, 1914, Board's report, p. 165.
 - 41. Ibid., Returns: 23 August, 1913, 30 June, 1918.
 - 42. DGL CD EC Reports: Meeting, 24 March, 1915, Board's report, p. 24.

members on 31 December, 1913 and a drop to 1560 members in 1914.⁴³ The loss was offset by pride in the numbers volunteering for service both in South West Africa and Europe. The District Grand Master, D. Sanders, reported on 18 September, 1915: "A number of brethren obeying the call of duty to King and country participated in the arduous campaign which has added the territory formerly known as German South West Africa to our Empire".⁴⁴ One of its members, Corporal G.V. Daly of the Natal Light Horse (Roystones), who served in South West Africa had been killed in action at Orange River on 18 November, 1914. Members had also fallen in Flanders, the Somme and Delville Wood.⁴⁵

"We are heartstricken at our losses but at the same time we are proud our loved ones died in the Great Cause, that we may continue to enjoy the privilege of our Race to live free and unfettered", Sanders proudly added,⁴⁶

By now the strongest section in South Africa, the Transvaal division of the English Constitution boasted 2894 members in 53 lodges on 28 February, 1911, with 295 in arrears.⁴⁷ At the outbreak of war, 2908 belonged to this division but 483 had not paid their dues and, according to masonic law, would be excluded after 2 years' non-payment. A further 253 had resigned and 60 were excluded.⁴⁸ Its leader, District Grand Master, C. Aburrow, told members in 1915: "The contingent being recruited from this country for Europe will no doubt include its quota of our members who are again ready to prove that Freemasonry stands for the highest principles of honour and justice which our country

43 NEA DGL NATAL EC Returns: 13 March, 1914, 26 September 1914.

44. NEA DGL NATAL EC Reports: Meeting, 18 September, 1915, Sanders' report, p. 57.

45. Ibid., 30 September, 1916, Roll of Honour, p. 76.

46. Ibid., Meeting, 25 March, 1916, Sanders' report, p. 7.

47. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 24 April, 1911, pp. 42, 47.

48. Ibid., Meeting, 27 April, 1914, Aburrow's report, p. 19.

is now called upon to defend against a system of tyranny and militarism".⁴⁹

That year, understandably, his numbers dropped to 2757, with 690 in arrears, presumably many of those being in the forces, while the first 11 masonic soldiers from his division had been killed in action. Some lodges were in recess.⁵⁰

From his division 241 masons went on active service and of these 33 lost their lives either in German South West Africa, German East Africa or Europe and many were wounded.⁵¹

A private lodge, Charles Warren Lodge of Kimberley, proudly boasted "since commencement of hostilities 20 members have volunteered or served on active service in various capacities in German South West Africa, overseas, German East Africa and other spheres".⁵²

49. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 2 October, 1915, Aburrow's report, p.8.
50. Ibid., Meeting 10 April, 1916, p. 17.
51. Ibid., Meeting, 28 April, 1919, Aburrow's report, p. 8; E.A. Walker: History of South Africa, p. 564, footnote p. 567, quoting Round Table No. 35, p. 496 - The estimated total white man power of South Africa (in 1918) was 685 000. Of these 136 070 enrolled for service and 76 184 went overseas. In addition, 92 837 Bantu and Coloured men served in various capacities. The percentage of Europeans who went overseas to the total white man power was 11.12, as compared with 13.48 from Canada, 13.43 from Australia and 19.35 from Zealand. The South African overseas effort was comparatively great, for the demands for men in East Africa were considerable and a large proportion of the Europeans were either unsympathetic or actively hostile to the Allied objects in the war. Union losses in the German South West African campaign were 113 killed and 311 wounded.
52. KEA DGL CD EC Reports: Meeting, 22 March, 1916, Report Charles Warren Lodge, p. 24.

Lodge records list the names of masons or their sons who fell in action. Professor C.E. Lewis, Past Deputy Grand Master of the Dutch Constitution, lost his son in the Battle of Jutland and the Scottish District Grand Lodge in the Western Province sympathised with him.⁵³ The same authority sent a telegram to the Governor General of South Africa, Lord Buxton, on the death of his son in France in 1917.⁵⁴

"The fact that our brethren, our fellow citizens and our fellow subjects of what we are proud to call the greatest Empire in the history of the world are almost hourly laying down their lives in the great cause of Righteousness, Justice and Liberty must be very present in the minds of most of you", Sir Frederick William Smith, District Grand Master of the Scottish District Grand Lodge in the Western Province told his members in November, 1916. He urged masons to think ahead to the "aftermath of this world war (which) will provide a vast opportunity and a limitless field of operations for the true mason who seriously seeks to put his masonic principles to lasting service in the uplifting and helping of humanity".⁵⁵ If masons rise to the challenge, Freemasonry would help bring into being "those spiritual forces that will destroy evil, strengthen the weak, uplift the fallen, help humanity out of the condition that fetters it and usher in the reign of Peace and Brotherhood for which the Soul of the World has yearned for centuries".⁵⁶ Scottish masonic losses in the war were particularly high. The Transvaal division lost 61 of their Brethren on active service. Overall, 646 from its 39

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53. DGL WP SC District Grand Committee Reports: 18 July, 1916, p. 8.
54. Ibid., 22 October, 1917, p.8.
55. Ibid., Minute Book, 26 July, 1915 - 12 January, 1925: Meeting, 6 November, 1916, pp. 8 - 9.
56. Ibid., p. 10.

lodges joined the forces.⁵⁷ Those who stayed behind to run the depleted lodges or hold in safekeeping the charters or warrants of authority of lodges in recess, organised war funds to help families of dead or wounded masons and contributed to Red Cross or other non-masonic benevolent organisations concerned in war relief. As masons serving in the forces were often kept on lodge strength without payment of dues, membership figures for the war years cannot be considered a true reflection of the strength of the Craft.⁵⁸

The British Lodge in Cape Town exemplified the voluntary relief work practised by lodges. It entertained 100 invalided soldiers from Maitland Hospital on 25 August, 1917, and in October, 75 from the Wynberg No.1. Military Hospital and 25 from the Simon's Town Royal Naval Hospital were also entertained, while a collection in the lodge provided delicacies for the more seriously wounded unable to leave the hospitals.⁵⁹ Fund-raising was an important task. For instance, during the hostilities, Rising Star Lodge, Bloemfontein, contributed £3.3.0. to the Belgian Victims of the War, £5 to masons interned at Ruthleben, £15.15 for Army Recreation Huts, £5.5 to King George's Fund for Sailors, £26.5 to St. Dunstons for Blinded soldiers, £80 to the Governor-General's Fund, and £52.10 to the War Memorial Fund.⁶⁰ The English masons in Natal contributed by 1918, £1783 to the War Relief Fund for the aid of returning distressed or wounded soldier-masons, while their

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57. TSA DGL TVL SC Reports: Meeting, 30 September, 1920, p. 9.
58. CA Unlisted PGL (Transvaal Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 30 August, 1918, Board's report, p. 4.
59. PMC 3/1/13 British Lodge, Minute Book, 16 June, 1915 - 20 August, 1924: Meetings, 15 August, 19 September, 17 October, 1917.
60. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years of Rising Star, Bloemfontein, p. 72.

colleagues in the Transvaal recorded £4753 in their War Fund, seven dependants received aid, and donations were made to hospitals and prisons' funds in a total expenditure of £2121 in 1918. Eastern Province masons donated £2394 to local and overseas war funds in the four years.⁶¹

There is little evidence of any effect on lodges of the divided opinions about the rights and wrongs of the war, but there was disquiet about the decrees from overseas Grand Lodges about the entry of "alien brethren" into South African lodges. Lodges of English, Scottish and Irish constitutions had been told by their overseas headquarters that it would be detrimental to their peace and harmony to admit masons of "enemy birth". Typical of these edicts was that issued by the Grand Lodge of Scotland on 15 August, 1916.⁶² Similar edicts were issued by the other British Grand Lodges. The Scottish Grand Secretary, David Reid, laid down: "That in order to prevent the peace and harmony of the craft being disturbed, it is necessary that all Brethren of alien enemy birth or nationality, should not, during the continuance of the war, and until Grand Lodge, after the treaty of peace has been signed, shall otherwise determine, attend any meeting of, or authorised by, Grand Lodge, or any Provincial or District Grand Lodge, or Daughter Lodge, and that such Brethren be, and they are hereby, required by Grand Lodge to abstain from such attendance".⁶³ However exemptions could be given to members of good standing with full approval of the District Grand Master.⁶⁴

Many lodges had members of German and Austrian descent, long

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- 61. NEA DGL NATAL EC Reports: Meeting, 16 March, 1918, p. 30; TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 28 April, 1919, p. 16; DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 11 September, 1918, pp. 11 - 12.
 - 62. DGL WP SC, Minute Book, 26 July, 1915 - 12 January, 1925: Letter Grand Lodge of Scotland to all provinces, 6 August, 1916.
 - 63. Ibid.
 - 64. Ibid.

absorbed into the South African community. To refuse them admission to their own lodges seemed contrary to masonic principles. The issue was further complicated by the Netherlandic lodges not applying this ban.

This restriction on the entry of "aliens" was particularly felt in the Free State. As it lasted until after the war, some lodges, reviving after the conflict, opposed it strongly. The Henry Forbes Lodge, Brandfort, Orange Free State, went so far as to surrender its warrant in 1924 when the United Grand Lodge of England again refused to lift the ban. Meeting in East London in September, 1924, the Eastern Division District Grand Lodge which had authority over this lodge, was asked to institute an inquiry into its action, to be told by the District Grand Secretary, H. Squire-Smith, the ban on brethren of German birth could not be lifted as it would be inimical to the interests of Freemasonry in Brandfort.⁶⁵

A member, W.A. Schroder said: "A member of the Board of General Purposes of Grand Lodge had visited Bloemfontein and that he had stated that he was quite unaware how seriously the question regarding the ban on persons of alien enemy birth affected lodges in their part of the country".⁶⁶

Its District Grand Secretary. H. Squire-Smith, had already urged England to lift the ban the year before. He had written: "We have brethren in the District who have done the best of service and are absolutely loyal to the Empire who are debarred from the Craft in our Constitution. They

65. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 10 September, 1924, pp. 25 - 26.

66. Ibid.

are admitted to lodges in the Netherlands and the Scottish Constitution (under conditions). I do not know what the Irish does.⁶⁷

"This is a country which contains, as well as British and Dutch, a considerable number of Germans; many are descendants of men brought out by the British or Colonial Governments with their families, as settlers. Thus our conditions are somewhat different to those which prevail in England.

"In our case it is essential to remove racial friction, and endeavour to all live together as South Africans - not as Dutch, English or German. Our Order should be a great help in this direction, and many of us think, and hope, that such will be the case".⁶⁸

But he was told again that there was no hope of Grand Lodge lifting the ban.⁶⁹ Immediately the Eastern District Grand Master, J.L.A. Duff, obtained support of other masonic leaders and took their case to Grand Lodge in London. It took time. He was only able to report to his annual meeting in September, 1927 that the Grand Lodge in England had at last lifted the ban, its decision being confirmed in December, 1928.⁷⁰

Somewhat in contrast, in the closing days of the first World War, strong anti-German feeling was expressed by some

67. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 10 September, 1924, H. Squire-Smith - Grand Secretary, 31 July, 1923, p. 27.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., Annexure A: Grand Secretary - H. Squire-Smith, 14 December, 1923.

70. Ibid., Meeting 14 September, 1927, Duff's report, pp. 9 - 10; FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 5 December, 1928, pp. 138 - 145.

masonic leaders. District Grand Master C. Aburrow of the English Transvaal division told his lodge in 1918 after 4 years of war: "When the war began there were some Freemasons who had hopes that the very friendly relations then existing between English and German masons would have a considerable influence in lessening the bitterness of the struggle and diminishing the horrors of war, but these hopes were soon shattered."⁷¹

"I know of no record of the German masons raising their voices against the atrocities that marked the entrance of their armies into Belgium and France and the inhuman actions which have accompanied the advancement or retirement of their forces."⁷²

"The German masons have not expressed their abhorrence of the wanton destruction of sacred edifices or the shelling of hospitals, the sinking of vessels carrying women and children or defenceless wounded.

"What conclusions are we forced to regarding German masonry? What can be the spirit underlying their practice of the rites and ceremonies of their Craft? They cannot have had the true spirit of masonry within them, they cannot have believed in the principles of brotherly love, relief and truth. They have really used masonry as a cloak to hide their practices of brute force to enslave mankind."⁷³

"We have to realize that no trust can be placed in the professions of enemies who deem all methods justified which assist in obtaining their ends. How can we meet them in masonry again?"⁷⁴

71. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 28 April, 1918, Aburrow's report, p. 19.

72. Ibid., p. 20.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

District Grand Master A.B. Gordon of the English Eastern Division complained: "When the war started in 1914 I was one of those who hoped that masonic influences in Germany would have had some effect in lessening the bitterness and horrors of war. These hopes, however, were soon shattered. We have no record of German masons having done anything to protest against the atrocities of their armies in Belgium and France or of their actions at sea in the sinking of hospital ships and vessels carrying women, children and defenceless wounded".⁷⁵

But the war ended with heartfelt thanks from the masons in South Africa. "We return grateful thanks to the Great Architect of the Universe that, in the great world conflict, he has inclined the scales in favour of our Empire and its allies and that in the freedom of the nations of the earth we may hope to find the harvest of the blood and tears shed during the past four years", said W.H. Low, District Grand Master of Scottish Freemasons in the Western Province.⁷⁶

In April, 1919, English masons in the Cape sent an address to the Grand Master, Duke of Connaught, asking him to convey to the King: "Their loyal and loving congratulations on the great and glorious victory achieved by His Majesty's Forces and those of His Allies after a prolonged and terrible struggle against a ruthless and treacherous foe in which no less than the freedom and civilisation of mankind were at stake and they most sincerely trust that the devoted labours of His Majesty's servants, together with those of His Allies at the Peace Conference now being held, will result in securing a true and lasting peace among the nations of the world".⁷⁷

75. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 11 September, 1918, Gordon's report, pp. 9 - 10.

76. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 27 January, 1919, Low's report, p. 4.

77. PMC DG WD EC Reports: Meeting, 30 April, 1919, address to Grand Master, facing p. 14.

On a similar note R.W.D. Sanders, head of Natal English Freemasonry, said: "Patriotism is one of the duties of Freemasonry and the sons of Freemasons have nobly shown they are ever ready to take up arms to fight for our King and our Country, for our homes and our loved ones and to stand up manfully and unflinchingly for Liberty, Freedom, Justice and Honour".⁷⁸

Masonic thanksgiving services were held. Some 1400 masons attended the Transvaal service at the Town Hall, Johannesburg on 19 December, 1918 and passed a resolution: "That this meeting of Freemasons in the Transvaal under the English, Irish and Scottish Constitutions here assembled, renders thanks to the Great Architect of the Universe for the glorious victories vouchsafed to the armies of Britain, her oversea Dominions and her allies in the just and righteous cause of liberty and in the suppression of cruel militarism and its resulting horrors". It concluded with an expression of loyalty to King George V.⁷⁹

Similar services were held in the other main centres, while in London, on 27 June, 1919, English masons resolved: "That the especial Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted masons of England records with gratitude and affection its thanks to all the forces of the Crown, on the Seas, on the Land and in the Air and in every direction who contributed to the victory for liberty, civilisation and right it celebrates today".⁸⁰

For South African masons, the war ended on a note of hope, hope that the sacrifices had not been in vain and that a new peaceful and prosperous era was at hand. While they and their country had not suffered the devastation of

78. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 25 September, 1918, Sander's report, p. 47.

79. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 28 April, 1919, Board's report, pp. 22 - 23.

80. PMC 1/1/6 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 September, 1911 - 14 October, 1925: Meeting, 17 October, 1919, Stanford's report on London, p. 44.

Europe, they were to face in the last months of 1918 a hint of that horror when a flu epidemic raged. "We have been remote from the war and have not realised all that it has meant to those who have borne the brunt", District Grand Master Low told his Scottish Lodge in Cape Town.⁸¹

"During the past month a message has been sent to us in the form of the direst pestilence which has ever visited our shores. The Angel of Death has been abroad in the land ... there is none who has not had to mourn the loss of near relative or dear friend ... thousands have passed beyond the veil. The fabric of our social life proved altogether insufficient to meet the awful and unexpected strain and many of us have witnessed scenes that recalled mediaeval description of the great plagues. Our citizens, high and low voluntarily faced disease and death in the most loathsome surroundings for the sake of their afflicted fellow beings".⁸² He asked his District Grand Lodge to record its sorrow at the deaths of three masons in action in the war and nine masons from influenza.⁸³

Many lodges throughout South Africa found it impossible to hold meetings in October and November, 1918 when the epidemic was at its height. Masonic authorities gave permission to abandon these meetings.⁸⁴ At Grahamstown the "formidable epidemic of influenza" carried off six members of Albany Lodge.⁸⁵ British Lodge in Cape Town could hold no meeting in October and recorded in November several members had died from the "terrible epidemic of Spanish influenza".⁸⁶

81. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 4 November, 1918, Low's report, p. 4.

82. Ibid., pp. 4 - 5.

83. Ibid., p. 6.

84. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 28 April, 1919, Board's report, p. 23; PMC 1/1/6 DGL WD EC, Minute Book, 15 September, 1911 - 14 October, 1925: Board's meeting, 13 November, 1918.

85. E.G. Dru Drury: Records of Albany Lodge, p. 50.

86. PMC 3/1/13 British Lodge, Minute Book, 16 June, 1915 - 20 August, 1924: Meeting, 20 November, 1918.

Its sister lodge, the Dutch De Goede Hoop, had to abandon its October meeting because of the epidemic and later dispatched letters of condolence to 15 members for losses to their families.⁸⁷ "Towards the end of 1918 the terrible epidemic of influenza occurred in South Africa and the visitation fell heavily on Kimberley and on the lodge Peace and Harmony", wrote Rogaly. The master and three members died of the flu.⁸⁸

The epidemic threw even greater burdens on the depleted lodges which had to find extra relief to help not only families affected by the war but those who had lost breadwinners from the flu. "A great part of the December meeting that year (1918) was taken up in recording sympathy and discussing relief to such of the brethren (and they were many) who had suffered from the prevailing epidemic", records T.G. Saunders in his history of Midland Lodge at Graaff-Reinet.⁸⁹

Soldiers on returning troopships from France are believed to have brought the flu to South Africa. It spread rapidly from October, 1918 and hundreds of thousands fell ill with consequent disruption of the economy. Some 139,471 died from the epidemic with the Cape suffering the most with 87,108 deaths.⁹⁰

87. O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 127.

88. A. Rogaly: Peace and Harmony Lodge (typed MSS), p. 30.

89. T.G. Saunders: Brief History of Midland Lodge, Graaff-Reinet, p. 42.

90. SESA 6, pp. 93 - 95 (J. Burman: Influenza).

CHAPTER VIII

A DREAM OF UNIVERSAL PEACE : 1919

"Universal Peace through International Freemasonry" had long been the dream of many masons. The number of masons in the world in 1919 approached more than 3,000,000, according to the S.A. Masonic Journal - and their influence, it was hoped, would help bring everlasting peace and make the world a better place after the disastrous war.¹ This hope was shared by South African masons.

Membership of the four masonic constitutions in South Africa - English, Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic, totalled more than 12,000 at the start of the 1914 - 1918 war. In the war years membership had fallen, but peace brought a resurgence as men returned from active service and more candidates became available to join the Craft. By 1921 combined membership had risen to more than 14,000.²

The words of a leading mason, Dr. R.D. Parker of Caledon, written in 1915, were before South African masons. He advocated that moral law or the "Public Right" should be the ruling spirit in politics in a postwar society. There should be a solid world-wide organisation prepared to do its utmost to forward any such scheme.³

"For the preparation of public opinion for practical execution of ideals so essentially Masonic, the cosmopolitan, non-political, non-secretarian nature of our brotherhood renders it peculiarly suitable.

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1. Grand Lodge returns quoted in S.A. Masonic Journal. See Appendix A.
 2. District and Provincial Grand Lodge Annual Returns, 1914 - 1920. See Appendix B.
 3. S.A. Masonic Journal, August, 1915, p. 97 (R.D. Parker: Moral Law).

"Only after a time of world-wide suffering from war could many nations be brought to detach their minds from local interests and seriously unite in a spirit of mutual self-sacrifice in order to attempt some great reform that might rid them not only from such a dread catastrophe in the future, but also from the yearly drain of hard earned money rendered necessary by the present attitude of international lawlessness, with its necessary concomitant of mutual suspicion."⁴

"To such of us as regard this principle of Right enforced by a common will as the vital point to be fought for in the final treaty, the necessity of awakening public opinion before it is too late seems urgent. Otherwise some premature peace may be made without this vital principle being secured. If this be not secured we shall mourn our dead as martyrs in a lost cause. Peace, with this unwon, would seem to us one of the most colossal tragedies in history", he added.⁵

Support came from the editor of the S.A. Masonic Journal, G.A. Deys, who pointed out that Masonry had an unparalleled opportunity to use "its might and beneficent influence" in producing a World Peace and not "peace at any price".⁶

"In the course of the coming years", said Sir Frederick Smith, retiring District Grand Master of the Scottish lodges in the Western Province, "Freemasonry will take its rightful place in the Divine work of helping to shape the course of better world conditions, recreating order out of the present world chaos and ushering in the dawn of a real

4. S.A. Masonic Journal, August, 1915, p. 79 (R.D. Parker: Moral Law).

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 81.

Brotherhood".⁷

"That this peace may inaugurate the inception of an era of the universal brotherhood of man is the earnest hope of all deep-thinking men and Freemasons", Col.W. Standford, head of English lodges in the Cape, told his District Grand Lodge in September, 1918.⁸

More specific was the Lord Bishop of Birmingham, the Grand Chaplain, who told the Bicentenary meeting of the United Grand Lodge of England in London on 24 June, 1917: "We shall make it part of our Masonic duty to see that the England of tomorrow in the days of peace shall be in its government and in its sacrifice for all that is noble a fitting example to every land".⁹

This masonic pledge to peace reached its climax at the special general meeting for Peace held in London on 27 June, 1919, attended by 8,330 including masons from all allied countries and British Dominions.¹⁰ Speaker after speaker emphasised the masonic fraternity must play its part in peaceful reconstruction of the world. The Grand Master of New York State Grand Lodge, Judge W.S. Farmer, one of several overseas speakers, set the theme: "Again the world moves forward under a new order and in its regeneration the Masonic fraternity will occupy an important place, exercise a potent influence steadfast to its history which is secure and ever looking forward in harmony with the

7. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 19 January, 1918, pp. 17 - 18.

8. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 17 September, 1918, p. 40.

9. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 24 June, 1917, p. 218.

10. Sir Alfred Robbins: English-speaking Freemasonry, p. 165.

eternal principle of God's fatherhood and man's brotherhood ... The Fraternity's fundamental principles once again must be made the rock foundation of the new civilisation. To this end all masonic activity must be brought together in perfect harmony".¹¹

These pious pronouncements, understandable after the war, followed the surge for peace and mutual understanding among nations in the non-masonic world that culminated in the creation of the League of Nations. But universal Masonry was equally as divided as those members of the League - divided over questions of territoriality, religion, ritual and policy. There had been several attempts previously to achieve universal Freemasonry. Continental masons had held conferences towards setting up an International Masonic Federation at Paris in 1889, at Antwerp in 1894 and at The Hague in 1896.¹² They finally decided in Paris in 1900 to "study the creation of an International Bureau for Masonic Affairs" and, at their Geneva conference in 1902, to create the bureau, which had as its aim, the bettering of relations between world masonic groups without impairing their sovereignty.¹³ On assuming office, the bureau's representative, Ed. Quartier-la-Tente, faced a shaky edifice of universal masonry where, beset by difference of interpretation, Grand Lodges refused to recognise others, and where national loyalties often overrode the basic masonic maxim that all are brothers. It was a masonic world in which church and state often pilloried or banned lodges, where political or religious affiliation disrupted harmony. Yet it was a populous world. He estimated that, between 1717 and 1913, there had arisen 300 Grand Lodges comprising 23,470 private lodges and

11. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 27 June, 1919, pp. 66 - 67.

12. Ed. Quartier-la-Tente: International Bureau for Masonic Affairs, 1900 - 1920, pp. 1 - 7.

13. Ibid., pp. 14 - 18.

2,662,053 masons.¹⁴ "Here, granted effective solidarity, were a lever to move popular sentiment and thought", wrote a Grahamstown masonic scholar, E.G. Dru Drury.¹⁵

Despairingly, Quartier-la-Tente reported in 1911 on lack of unity in universal Masonry. From the inception of the International Bureau in 1902, the Swiss Grand Lodge, Alpina, entrusted with its organisation, had circularised 250 Grand Lodges in the world for their support. Not one had replied and he blamed England for this lack of response.¹⁶

The United Grand Lodge of England, mother of all Grand Lodges in the world, led other Anglo-Saxon Grand Lodges in Scotland, Ireland and the United States of America in refusing to take part in any of the earlier conferences or in contributing to the Bureau.¹⁷ England's stand rested on its decision in 1878 not to enter into relations with any Grand Lodge which refused to recognise God in its rituals.¹⁸ In defence of its attitude, J.W. Stubbs, past Grand Secretary, wrote: "There had from early times been a different outlook in English Masonry from that which was in vogue in other parts of the Masonic world. To call it an isolationist outlook would be overstating the case. It would perhaps be fairer to describe it as a positive policy of looking for reasons why a Grand Lodge should be recognised rather than the negative one of recognising it providing that there was no valid reason for declining to do so".¹⁹

14. Ed. Quartier-la-Tente: International Bureau for Masonic Affairs, 1900 - 1920, p. 54.

15. E.G. Dru Drury: Masonic Punishments, p. 8.

16. S.A. Masonic Journal, October, 1911, pp. 23 - 28 (E. Quartier-la-Tente, Universal Freemasonry).

17. Ibid., p. 27.

18. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 6 March, 1878, p. 151.

19. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p. 167. (J.W. Stubbs: Last 50 Years).

In 1878 England caused the first serious rift in universal masonry when it severed relations with the Grand Orient of France which had removed from its lodges the Bible or "Volume of the Sacred Law" and which had ceased to insist that its members recognised the existence of God, known to masons as the "Great Architect of the Universe".²⁰ England's committee of inquiry pointed out that before 1877 the Grand Orient of France's laws included in its constitution: "Its principles are the existence of God, the immortality of the soul and human solidarity".²¹ This was changed in that year to: "Its principles are absolute liberty of conscience and human solidarity".²² England acted on its committee of inquiry's report and suspended relations with the Grand Orient, expressing its concern that France should remove the fundamental masonic landmarks - beliefs in God and immortality of the soul - from its principles and decreeing that members of any lodges which did not recognise God, as well as those of the Grand Orient, must not be admitted to English lodges.²³

The British Freemasons Chronicle of 9 February, 1889, commented later: "When the Grand Orient of France decided it was no longer necessary to enforce an expression of belief in a Deity from every candidate previous to his initiation, many of the better class of French Freemasons withdrew from active membership of the Order, and in not a few cases the whole condition of Lodges was changed; men were admitted who would previously have been rejected."²⁴

"In England we are not so excitable over political matters as our neighbours, and we are able to keep party feeling

20. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 6 March, 1878, p. 149, Committee's report, 22 February, 1878.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 151.

24. Freemasons Chronicle, 9 February, 1889, p. 24.

distinct both from our daily avocations and our private affairs. The French people, on the contrary, have the credit of making everything subservient to party and politics, and this characteristic has unfortunately extended to Freemasonry, with the result that the present condition of the Order in France is about as much unlike what we regard as true Freemasonry as anything bearing the name could possibly be.²⁵

"The Order in France has resolved itself into a party organisation pure and simple, and does not even enjoy the benefits of the checks which are imposed by public action on associations which are free and open to all. In short, it has become the most dangerous and the most lawless of all associations - a combination for political purposes, meeting in secret, and binding its members with the utmost severity to keep from the outside world all knowledge of what is going on in its midst'.²⁶

However, in 1913, England joyously recognised a new Grand Lodge in France - the Independent and Regular National Grand Lodge of France and the Colonies, which adhered to the fundamental principles required by the United Grand Lodge of England - recognition of God and immortality of the soul.²⁷

As the unrecognised Grand Orient of France had attended the Continental conferences of 1889, 1894 and 1896, England and its allies therefore refused to do so. It was a stalemate for the bureau's organiser, Quartier-la-Tente, who commented: "If Anglo-Saxon Masonry is especially ritual

25. Freemason's Chronicle, 9 February, 1889, p. 24.

26. Ibid.

27. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 3 December, 1913, pp. 78 - 79.

and charitable, German Masonry is especially philosophical and traditional. Latin Masonry to which belongs Hungarian Masonry, is especially very active, very humanitarian and very valiant for the social welfare of humanity.²⁸

"All three are working for the good of humanity, they all deserve equal respect and esteem; their activity and the part they play are beneficial, and one wonders what degree of well-being humanity would have reached, if such real and sincere fraternity had always presided over the relations of these groups among one another."²⁹

"Our study of this question has shown us that among the Grand Lodges of the World there were many points of contact and general agreement on the important principles of the Royal Art".³⁰

But little unity was reflected in his outline of international masonry in 1911. He wrote that he had, at the beginning of the 20th century, attempted to win the support of the Grand Lodges of the United States who had informed him that they recognised the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, Cuba and New Zealand. They did not recognise the 8 Grand Lodges of Germany, the Grand Orient of Holland, the Grand Orient of Egypt and Cairo, Swiss Lodge Alpina, the Grand Orient of Argentine Republic, the Grand Orient of Belgium, the Grand Orient of Chile, the Grand Lodge of Denmark, the Grand Orient of France, the Grand Lodge of Greece, the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary, the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, the Grand Orient of Italy, the Grand Lodge of Luxemburg, the Grand Lodge of Norway,

28. S.A. Masonic Journal, October 1911, pp. 23 - 24
(E. Quartier-la-Tente: Universal Freemasonry).

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

the Grand Orient of Portugal, the Grand Lodge of Peru, the Grand Lodge of San Domingo, the Grand Orient of Spain, the Grand Lodge of Sweden, the Grand Orient of Uruguay and the Grand Orient of Venezuela.³¹

Some Grand Lodges had removed the Bible or Volume of the Sacred Law from their lodges; and other Grand Lodges by recognising these "National" Grand Lodges had themselves been disbarred. Others had infringed on the territorial sovereignty of Grand Lodges in the United States. The Grand Lodge of Hamburg had founded lodges in New York and the Grand Orient of France founded lodges in Louisiana. The Grand Lodges of Denmark, Sweden and Norway were unrecognised as the respective kings were by birth heads of the Orders and hence the orders were not truly fraternal.³²

In South Africa in 1909 a Coloured lodge, Lodge Ethiopia, under the Negro Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, had been started in Cape Town but was not recognised by the four accepted constitutions - English, Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic - already working there.³³

As the first world war neared, individual Grand Lodges did make peace-making attempts. A deputation from the United Grand Lodge of England, led by the Pro-Grand Master, Lord Ampthill, visited Berlin in May 1913 and met leading German masons to foster closer relations. Reporting back to the United Grand Lodge, Ampthill said the English deputation was "impressed by the intense earnestness of our German brethren and the high and pure ideals of Freemasonry which they keep before them".³⁴

"I leave it to you to imagine for yourselves what far

31. S.A. Masonic Journal, October, 1911, pp. 26 - 27
(E. Quartier-la-Tente: Universal Freemasonry).

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 27 - 28.

33. *Ibid.*

34. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 4 June, 1913, p. 50.

reaching advantages might well result from mutual liking, confidence and understanding between a great organised body of Germans and a great organised body of Englishmen. Those advantages would extend far outside the sphere of Freemasonry", he said.³⁵

The French masons had also tried. A conference between German and French masonic institutions was planned for 15 August, 1914 at Frankfurt. "It sounded like the herald of an era of disarmament and goodwill amongst nations, at least in Western Europe. We were rudely awakened from our golden dreams when on the 4th of August, the Armies of the Kaiser, with the approval of the whole German nation, masons included, sprang treacherously on unprepared Belgium", wrote Count Goblet D'Alveilla, a leading Belgian mason.³⁶ Belgian lodges were closed and masonic officials imprisoned. The Count, forced to flee to Antwerp, wrote to all masonic bodies in the world protesting against the German outrages. "There is a cause dear to all Freemasons: that of Justice and Civilisation endangered by the dream of universal domination, from a people which formerly stood in the first rank of modern culture, but who now reverted to the behaviour of the barbarian invaders".³⁷

The German Grand Masters on 10 January, 1915, suspended relations with the Grand Lodges of enemy countries and broke off relations with Italy and France claiming: "Italian Freemasonry ... instigated by their French brethren have in their entirety interfered in political party controversies leading up to war and have thereby violated grievously the elementary masonic law which forbids such conduct".³⁸

35. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 4 June, 1913, p. 50.

36. S.A. Masonic Journal, February 1923, pp. 359 - 362 (Count G. D'Alveilla: 50 Years of Masonic Life in Belgium, 1870 - 1920).

37. Ibid., p. 362.

38. S.A. Masonic Journal, November, 1915, p. 24, quoting London Daily Mail.

In 1916 the President of the Board of General Purposes, Sir Alfred Robbins, reported to the United Grand Lodge of England that: "There has been no intercourse with any Grand Lodge in an enemy country since hostilities began".³⁹ Relations with the Grand Lodges of Germany were severed in that year.⁴⁰

The ban imposed during the war by the British Grand Lodges on "alien" freemasons attending lodges was an agonising decision to make.⁴¹ Were all masons, regardless of nationality, members of a world brotherhood or did national loyalties take preference? This question had been widely discussed in masonic journals since the start of the world war. English masons of alien birth, resident in allied countries, had three courses open to them - expulsion from lodges, non-attendance, or being admitted freely with nationality disregarded. In August, 1914, The Freemason struck the fundamental note: "In the lodge there shall be no national barriers erected - when we meet we are not merely Englishmen, Frenchmen and Germans - we are Masons with common vows and principles".⁴² But by next year the ban was imposed, a decision which gravely concerned many South Africans, as recorded in Chapter 7.

In Britain, where anti-German feeling ran high, the ban was considered essential. "Feeling against members of English lodges who, though naturalised citizens, were of enemy country birth, steadily rose. This, as the Masonic authorities were constrained to recognise, was very largely due to the indiscretion, and sometimes even worse, of certain of these Brethren themselves", wrote Sir Alfred Robbins, President of the Board of General Purposes of the United

39. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 3 March, 1916, p. 9.

40. Ibid.

41. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 2 June, 1915, pp. 280 - 288.

42. E.G. Dru Drury: Masonic Punishments, p. 16, quoting The Freemason, 8 August, 1914, 24 October, 1914.

Grand Lodge of England.⁴³

"The sinking by submarine of the Lusitania in the spring of 1915 let loose a flood of (anti-German) feeling that threatened for a short time to be overwhelming", he added.⁴⁴ On the other side Grand Lodge had been restraining "the temper of those lodges which contained members of alien enemy country birth who not only persisted in attending the meetings but sometimes disturbed the proceedings by unseemly and most untimely displays of anti-British sentiment".⁴⁵ To prevent the peace and harmony of the Craft being disturbed, Robbins, as President of the Board of General Purposes of the English Grand Lodge, put forward a resolution, which was carried, to Grand Lodge in 1915 that all masons of German, Austrian, Hungarian and Turkish birth abstain from attending any English masonic meetings during the war excepting those serving in the forces or who have sons serving to "avoid friction and discord".⁴⁶

He was not without critics. In the debate in Grand Lodge, Canon F.J. Foakes-Jackson said the masonic principle of brotherhood was at stake: "Speculative Masonry arose in this country (England) in times of a civil and religious war of exceptional bitterness and one of its chief objects was to remind Brethren that our common humanity is a bond of union which is regarded as obligatory despite the barriers which nationality and the deepest differences, political, religious and social, have set up".⁴⁷ Masons who were enemies of Britain were still Brethren. "In the Boer War ... the ties of brotherhood were recognised by both sides as binding provided they did not interfere with the military duties of

43. Sir Alfred Robbins: English-speaking Freemasonry, p. 159.

44. Ibid., p. 161.

45. Ibid.

46. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 2 June, 1915, p. 280.

47. Ibid., p. 284.

those who sought to ameliorate the lot of the Brethren who were wounded or prisoners-of-war or to defend the homes and those nearest and dearest to their enemies from wanton pillage or insult".⁴⁸

The suspension of an English Lodge, Royal Warrant Holders, brought masonic feeling in England to a head. The Lodge excluded by a majority decision one of its members, a German, Mr. Mayer, who had told members that, although he had been naturalised 25 years, he was of German blood and he hoped in his heart that Germany would win. He appealed against his exclusion to Grand Lodge which lifted it and, instead, suspended his lodge. However, the lodge refused to readmit Mayer and appealed unsuccessfully.⁴⁹

In December, 1915 anti-German feeling was openly expressed in the English Grand Lodge. Col. C.E. Cassal proposed that individual lodges be instructed to examine and, if agreed, expel members of German birth. "It is known and it is admitted that German influence, German so-called peaceful penetration, has been introduced into every society and every institution not only in this country but throughout the world. This peaceful penetration, so-called, has been applied in British Freemasonry".⁵⁰

This volunteer artilleryman then fired his large calibre guns. "I will freely admit that my object and my desire is to destroy once and for ever all German influence in British Freemasonry".⁵¹ The "abominable crimes" committed by the Germans had been approved and applauded by the German nation as a whole, by the leaders of German thought including the German masonic authorities, he said.⁵² Any mason who would

48. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 2 June, 1915, p. 284.

49. Ibid., Meeting, 1 September, 1915, pp. 317 - 326.

50. Ibid., Meeting, 1 December, 1915, pp. 341 - 342.

51. Ibid., p. 342.

52. Ibid.

condone hideous crimes was no longer a mason. He appealed to Grand Lodge to "eradicate the German cancer from English Freemasonry".⁵³

The ban on "alien" masons was only lifted 10 years after the Armistice through the efforts of J.C.A. Duff, District Grand Master for English lodges in the South African Eastern Province, who personally addressed Grand Lodge in London in 1927 with authority from 180 lodges and 9,975 English masons in South Africa to plead for a change of mind.⁵⁴ He told Grand Lodge of the distress the ban had been causing in his country. One mason was naturalised "some 20 or 25 years ago. He is as English as I am, his services to the Empire during the war were rewarded by the King who conferred a knighthood upon him. Yet he cannot enter his Lodge".⁵⁵ Another senior mason could not attend the very lodge named after him. Masons of German birth who came to South Africa to "fight for the white people against the natives" were given farms, were naturalised and became Englishmen. "They married English women and they have English homes. They raised English sons and English daughters ... their English sons fought for us and in some cases they died for us. Yet these old men cannot come into our lodges", he said convincingly.⁵⁶

Though the United Grand Lodge of England eventually changed its mind over the entry of aliens into lodges, it reiterated its determination after the war not to recognise Grand Lodges such as the Grand Orient of France which did not express a belief in God, to the detriment of the efforts of Continental Freemasons who worked for unity in the postwar euphoria. The most active worker for a Masonic international peace conference had been the representative

53. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 1 December, 1915, pp. 343 - 344.

54. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 2 March, 1927, p. 296.

55. Ibid., p. 297.

56. Ibid.

of the International Bureau for Masonic Affairs, Ed. Quartier-la-Tente. But, in a review of the first 20 years of the bureau's existence, he revealed that universal masonry was as far away in 1920 as it was in 1900 despite the several international conferences since 1889. None of these was attended by English-speaking grand lodges as they were initially organised by the Grand Orient of France from which England severed relations in 1878.⁵⁷

Without funds to run the bureau and without support from Anglo-Saxon Masonry, Quartier-la-Tente complained: "It is astonishing that Masonry which has inscribed the words 'Universal Fraternity' on its flag should show itself so little inclined to promote an entente cordiale among its different groups and that 18 years of endeavour should have been almost in vain".⁵⁸ While the mother Grand Lodge, the United Grand Lodge of England, professed a need for harmony, he added: "Alone the Grand Lodge of England is capable of favouring the propagation and development of the International Bureau for Masonic Affairs in English-speaking countries; as long as it persists in its utter silence (in communications with the Bureau) there is no reason to hope for a rapid change of interest in this work in English-speaking lands".⁵⁹

England and most of the Grand Lodges in the United States had ignored the volume of letters and pamphlets sent out by the Bureau over 18 years and had not contributed any funds to maintain it.⁶⁰ In a circular dated 1 February, 1920 to all Grand Lodges, Quartier-la-Tente made a last appeal to world Freemasonry to keep the Bureau alive. Only 20

57. E. Quartier-la-Tente: International Bureau for Masonic Affairs 1900 - 1920, pp. 11 - 14.

58. Ibid., p. 25.

59. Ibid., p. 32.

60. Ibid., pp. 26 - 27.

had contributed to it on an irregular basis during the past 18 years and it had never been possible to establish an annual budget. He concluded that, if no answer were received from Grand Lodges by 1 September, 1920, "we shall consider your silence as signifying assent to the dissolution" of the bureau.⁶¹

The Swiss Grand Lodge Alpina then took the initiative to organise an international congress in Geneva in 1921 to discuss differences between Grand Lodges. The United Grand Lodge of England, however, declined the invitation. Pro Grand Master Lord Ampthill wrote to the Grand Orient of the Netherlands which conveyed the invitation: "The United Grand Lodge of England will be unable to send representatives on this occasion. It never participates in a masonic gathering in which are treated as an open question what it always has held to be antient and essential landmarks of the Craft, these being an express belief in the Great Architect of the Universe and an obligatory recognition of the Volume of the Sacred Law".⁶² England's resolve not to communicate with those Grand Lodges which have "repudiated or made light of these landmarks" remained unshaken, he added.⁶³ English Freemasonry, because of the war, had strengthened its determination to keep away from participation in politics and had not attended any international conferences because of this. By token, no English-speaking Grand Lodge would attend the Geneva Conference.⁶⁴

This refusal was again aimed at the unrecognised Grand Orient of France. But support for some reconciliation between the

61. E. Quartier-la-Tente: International Bureau for Masonic Affairs, 1900 - 1920, pp. 25 - 27.

62. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 3 March, 1921, pp. 8 - 9, Ampthill - Netherlands, 3 February, 1921.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

two Grand Lodges was heard in South Africa. Charles Aburrow, District Grand Master of English lodges in the Transvaal, told his District Grand Lodge in 1918 that in 1878 England had broken off relations with the Grand Orient of France which had removed from its constitution those paragraphs which asserted a belief in God.⁶⁵

"It is perfectly competent for English Freemasons to require such a confession of faith from its own members, but have we a right to refuse brotherly communion with members belonging to other masonic societies which are founded on the truly masonic principles of brotherly love, relief and truth, yet do not ask for a confession of religious faith before admitting men into their Order?"⁶⁶

"These French and other Brethren have fought side by side with our Brothers through this terrible yet glorious struggle for liberty and the right to live according to our own conscience, have died to save the lives of our Brothers; surely they are our Brethren, although they had no religious test according to our lights imposed upon them on becoming members of their Masonic Order. Surely, Brethren, we can find a method of admitting them to our Masonic assemblies; it is within the range of practical masonry, and after due consideration we ought to arrive at a way that will be honourable to all", he said.⁶⁷

In support, the South African Masonic Journal asked:

"While a professed atheist is not at present debarred from admission into French Freemasonry we imagine the number of atheists in the Craft in France is not a very large one ... The spirit of unity is very strong on both sides (England and France) and it should not be impossible to find a way to bridge over the gulf".⁶⁸

65. TEA DGL TVL EC: Meeting, 29 April, 1918, p. 20.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., p. 21.

68. S.A. Masonic Journal: March, 1918, p. 435.

These appeals were ignored by England while the international conference was abandoned because of the small number of acceptances.⁶⁹ There was some opportunity for individual masons to mix internationally - through an organisation known as the Universal League of Freemasonry formed in 1905. It held several meetings in European capitals until 1913 when the war interfered with its work. It resumed its annual meetings from 1920. Carefully, it confined its membership to Freemasons whose Grand Lodges demanded a belief in God and abstained from discussion of political and religious subjects. In 1928 the league issued a manifesto in which it declared: "The aim and desire of beneficent and true Freemasonry is the pacification of the world and the universal brotherhood of mankind. Only a united and universal Freemasonry can undertake such an enormously difficult task. Our aim is the international union of man and nation".⁷⁰

Such grandiose sentiments found little support in English Freemasonry, either in Britain or its overseas strongholds. The Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge of England pointed out that, at the League's congresses, held usually at The Hague, "No one will be entitled to speak as representing the United Grand Lodge of England. Masons who attend must not give the idea they are representatives of English Freemasonry".⁷¹

Continental Freemasonry persevered. From the corpse of the International Masonic Bureau was created in 1921 the "Association Maçonnique Internationale" - an "honest attempt to unite Freemasonry internationally in an organised form".⁷² This time the Grand Lodge of New York agreed to cooperate in its formation on the understanding that it would only do so

69. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 3 October, 1921, pp. 54 - 55, 67 - 68.

70. S.A. Masonic Journal: January, 1934, pp. 34 - 35, Universal League of Freemasonry.

71. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 4 September, 1929, p. 230.

72. E. Lennhoff: The Freemasons, p. 346.

if the Anglo-Saxon, and not the French, conception of the principles of Freemasonry was adopted. Shortly afterwards New York resigned from the association, followed in 1925 by the Grand Orient of Holland.⁷³ Regarded as a bridge between the two schools of masonic thought, Holland was persuaded to rejoin the AMI in 1927 on condition certain principles were accepted, including one acknowledging the existence of a "higher and ideal principle known as the Great Architect of the Universe". This brought heated debates at the Paris Convention of the AMI in December 1927. The Grand Orient of France would not deviate from its point of view - to deny the existence of a Supreme Being. Holland withdrew from the AMI which was thus rendered ineffectual.⁷⁴

There obviously would be no compromise on beliefs among world Freemasons in the cause of world peace. South African Freemasons, somewhat aloof from this international masonic controversy, must have been perplexed and doubts were expressed in the postwar years that the masonic teaching of peace and brotherhood had failed. While the idealists in South Africa looked towards masonic influence helping to bring about a lasting world peace, the realists faced up to the postwar problems in their country.

73. E. Lennhoff: The Freemasons, pp. 346 - 347.

74. Ibid., pp. 347 - 348.

CHAPTER IX

BETWEEN THE WARS

"The extraordinary growth of Freemasonry since the close of the war" was noted by the Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1920. In 1913 this constitution had 3155 lodges with 677 abroad, and in 1919, 3442 with 723 abroad. In 1913, 14831 Grand Lodge certificates for new Master Masons were issued and by 1919 this number of new certificates increased to 24476. By 1920 total membership topped 240,000.¹

South African lodges participated in this sudden increase of interest in Freemasonry. Perhaps returning exservicemen felt the need to belong to an organisation again. "The great expansion of Freemasonry during the closing stages and the few years after both world wars may be due to the fact that, in times of national trouble, Freemasonry expanded because it provided a centre of stability in a world of chaos", suggests Mr. John Hamill, Assistant Grand Librarian of the United Grand Lodge of England.² "The war has undoubtedly increased that strange mysterious bond of brotherhood", the Deputy District Grand Master of the English Transvaal lodges, J.W. Pearson, said.³ His membership shot up from 2390 active members by 1920 with 360 in arrears to 2594 with 342 in arrears by 31 December the next year.⁴

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1. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 12 June, 1920, pp. 176 - 177.
 2. J. Hamill, Asst. Grand Librarian: Letter to writer, 22 September, 1981.
 3. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 22 October, 1921, p.12.
 4. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 24 April, 1920, p. 17; Ibid., 30 April, 1921, p. 29.

His colleagues in the Western Province reported that membership increased from 1689 on 31 December, 1918 to 1876 in 1920 and 2003 in 1921.⁵ English lodges in Natal showed an increase in numbers from 1661 at the end of 1918 to 1734 by 1920 and 1911 by 1921.⁶ In 1918 the English Eastern Division recorded 2179 members and by 1921, 2366 members.⁷

Scottish Freemasonry showed remarkable increases in postwar membership, the Transvaal Division particularly. Membership in that area increased from 2700 in 1913 to 3050 in 1921.⁸

The two Netherlandic Provincial Grand Lodges in South Africa also had substantial rises in membership after the war. Transvaal Province numbers went up from 297 in 1919 to 354 in 1921, while the other province, which included the rest of South Africa, had its rolls increased from 1077 in 1914 to 1180 in 1923.⁹

Another cause for the increased membership of masonic lodges in South Africa in the immediate postwar years was the economic upturn. An inflationary boom occurred from the middle of 1919 to May to July 1920 which, however, was followed by a major downward swing in the economy until mid-1922.¹⁰

The diversification of the economy had an equally marked effect with new lodges being formed in those years in new industrial

5. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 10 May, 1922, p. 18.

6. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meetings, 20 March, 1920, p. 31; Ibid., 26 March, 1921, p. 34.

7. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 11 September, 1918, p. 55; Ibid., 14 September, 1921, p. 47.

8. TSA DGL TVL SC, Minute Book, 22 June, 1912 - 15 December, 1926: Meeting, 28 June, 1913; Ibid., 27 June, 1921.

9. PGL TVL NC Reports: Meeting, 30 June, 1918, p. 14; Ibid., 30 July, 1921, p. 24; PGL (Tvl excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 28 August, 1914, p. 13; Ibid., 30 August, 1924, p. 14.

10. C.W.G. Schumann: Structural Changes in South Africa 1806 - 1936, p. 248.

centres, particularly in the Transvaal. Appropriately the first new English lodge was the Victory Lodge at Brakpan consecrated in June 1920.¹¹ The war had spurred on local industrial expansion to substitute imports because of shipping difficulties. South Africa's economy had become broadened, switching from full emphasis on agricultural production to mining and industrial. Gold, diamonds and coal became major exports, their exploitation giving rise to a burgeoning secondary industrial sector.

The Government's responsibilities were also extended as a result. Protection for the drought-hit farming community was important; equally so was finding employment for poor whites flocking from farm to town and the supply and protection of skilled white workers in mining and industry.¹² With this industrialisation came labour problems.

The worldwide 1920s depression affected South Africa with falling prices, bankruptcies, unemployment and wage cuts. The falling gold price forced the Transvaal Chamber of Mines to propose wage cuts and recommend that the ratio of whites to blacks on the mines be adjusted in favour of the blacks to save costs. White coal miners protested and struck and by 1922, after clashes with police, Rand strikers turned to lawlessness and rebellion, committing robbery, arson and murder. In March, 1922 Smuts, who had succeeded to the Premiership on the death of Louis Botha in 1919, declared martial law and crushed the rebellion in which 153 died. The miners' efforts to preserve white jobs failed and the demands of the mining companies for more black and

11. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 30 April, 1921, p.29.

12. M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson (eds.): Oxford History of South Africa, II, pp. 17 - 29 (D. Hobart Houghton: Economic Development, 1865 - 1965).

cheaper labour prevailed.¹³

In these uneasy years, candidates to Freemasonry fell away while many hundreds of members resigned or were excluded for non-payment of dues. In 1921, the Transvaal English Division had 482 in arrears and 610 in 1923.¹⁴ "The serious disturbances" on the Rand in March 1922 and the financial stringency had affected lettings of the Freemasons' Hall, Johannesburg Headquarters of this division.¹⁵ Arrears in the English Eastern District rose from 410 in 1922 to 459 in 1923.¹⁶

Masonic Benevolent Funds were strained to the limit during the depression to meet calls from distressed masons and their families. The Natal English district disbursed £280 in 1922, well in excess of income from its Benevolent Fund.¹⁷ The Eastern English District Grand Lodge paid out £1071 in benevolent grants in 1921 and £1418 in 1923.¹⁸ In England the picture was the same. United Grand Lodge Board of Benevolence disbursed grants of £25740 in 1922 compared to £15945 in 1913.¹⁹

Apart from making grants, Freemasons in South Africa launched several projects to help the unemployed. In the Western Province all lodges contributed to assist the unemployed, mainly through the Quarry Relief Fund.

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13. C.F.J. Muller: 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 395 - 398 (B.J. Liebenberg: Union of South Africa up to the Statute of Westminster, 1910 - 1931); C.W. de Kiewiet: History of South Africa, pp. 169 - 172.
 14. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1922, p. 40; Ibid., 26 April, 1924, p. 38.
 15. Ibid., Meeting, 25 September, 1922, p. 7.
 16. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 10 September, 1924, p. 10.
 17. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 17 March, 1923, p.10.
 18. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 13 September, 1922, p. 26; Ibid., 10 September, 1924, p. 21.
 19. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 17 March, 1923, p. 23.

Col. W.E.Standford, Head of the English lodges in that area, told his lodge in 1921 that two masons, Payne and Saby, were on this fund's committee.²⁰ Reporting to him, the organiser, Payne, wrote: "The committee has carried on an immense work among the white unemployed of this city (Cape Town). Up to date 13000 meals have been given to the men working on the various relief works ... besides which we have been able to assist over 700 families who are much in distress at the present time".²¹

"We have sent out over £500 of groceries ... in addition we have been able to clothe over 1500 children besides the husbands and wives of these families.

"Amongst the young men who are unemployed we have been able to carry on a successful work. We have erected two large marquees on the Green Point Track where these single men are housed. To entertain these men, and keep them from the many vices which surround them, we have formed an entertainment committee for their benefit, and are generally looking after their welfare and already I am pleased to say that the young men under our charge are improving both morally and physically.

"With regard to the Masonic Brethren whom we are so continually meeting, I feel it is only right that you should know how we are specially dealing with them. As soon as a Brother is discovered, and we are finding them practically every day, he is invited to see me personally. I then obtain from him full details of his case, his lodge, his wife and family etc., and, after satisfying myself that everything is in order, he is then listed as a case for special consideration."²³

20. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 14 October, 1921, p. 37.

21. Ibid., p. 38.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

"Apart from the ordinary relief extended to the usual families, the Brethren receive an extra allowance of groceries per week. In many cases we pay their rent, clothe them, and give them any little luxuries that are specially donated to the Committee. We have succeeded in fixing several Brethren in positions of work, and in many cases have advanced the fare to transfer them to other districts where work was obtainable", wrote Payne.²⁴

Attempts were made in 1923 to set up a masonic committee to investigate the question of unemployment and form an unemployment bureau but without success.²⁵ Again, in 1933, Transvaal masons supported an unemployment bureau for jobless masons. But the promoters were themselves jobless and after a month disappeared and the scheme died.²⁶ However Natal masons of all constitutions successfully ran an unemployment bureau from Durban for some years from 1926.²⁷

Individual lodges did what they could to aid their unemployed members and families. Mrs. Raymond of Cape Town was given £5 a month during 1923 by British Lodge to help her jobless husband maintain his large family. The lodge also sent her a "parcel of necessaries".²⁸ A Mrs. Harrison was helped for a similar reason every month until the end of 1924.²⁹ A widow, Mrs. Copping, was assisted as her daughter could not find employment.³⁰ A collection for the unemployed

24. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 14 October, 1921, p. 38.

25. S.A. Masonic Journal, July, 1923: Editorial, p. 91.

26. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 7 February, 1933, p.47.

27. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 4 October, 1925, p.90.

28. PMC 3/1/13 British Lodge, Minute Book, 16 June, 1915 - 15 October, 1924: Meeting, 16 May, 1923; Ibid., 20 June, 1923.

29. Ibid., Meeting, 21 November, 1923.

30. Ibid., Meeting, 16 April, 1924.

taken by the naval lodge Phoenix at Simon's Town at its meeting in July, 1921 realised £8.6s.6d., which, through another collection was brought up to £17.7s. and finally reached £20 that same evening.³¹ The Scottish District Grand Committee in the Western Province donated £6 for "railway fares to enable a Brother to proceed upcountry to take up work".³²

But there were snags. The Eastern District Grand Master, English Constitution, A.B. Gordon, deplored the "habit of lodges sending brethren out of work to another town where there is a lodge in search of work without finding out from the second lodge if there is work available. It is a waste of funds for travel".³³

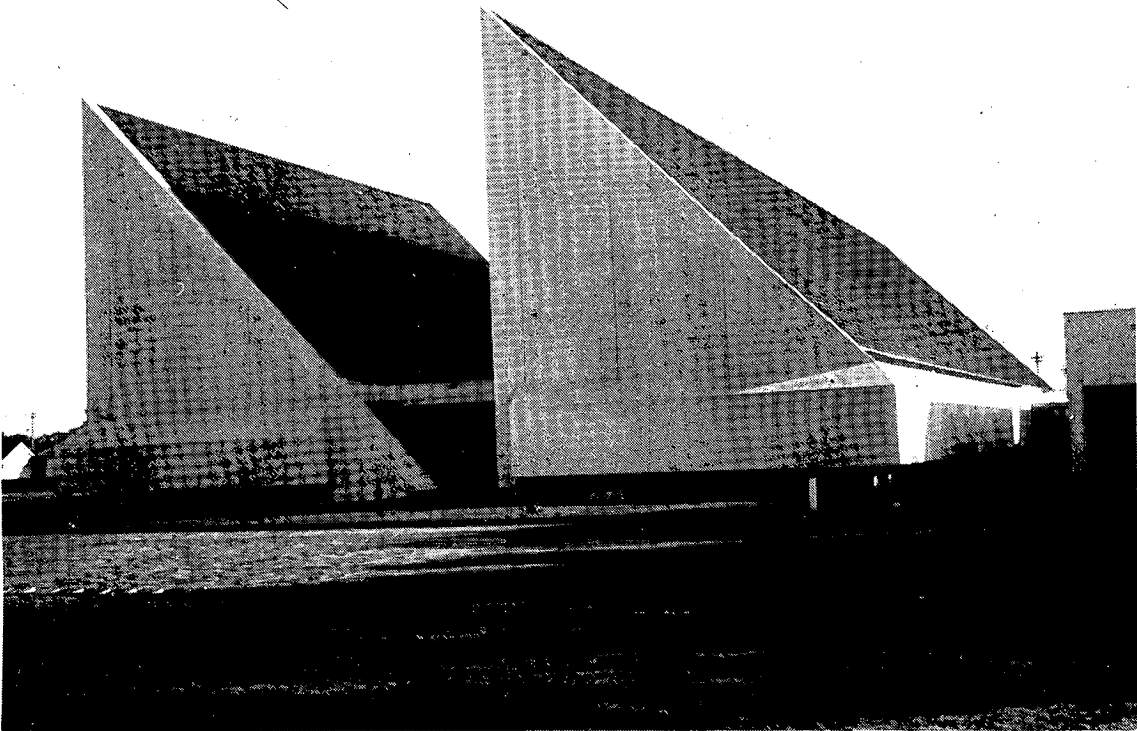
Though the work of benevolence in the depressed times depleted lodge coffers, masons found funds to contribute to the Masonic War Memorial Fund in England. Known as the Masonic Million Memorial Fund, it was to pay for the construction of a new Freemasons Hall in Great Queen Street, London, in honour of those fallen in the Great War. The massive building includes a Grand Temple seating 2000, another for 600 and 15 other lodge rooms, library and museum. Construction took 14 years at a cost of £1,172,019. Contributions and interest realised £1,382,045.³⁴ By 1926, the South African English district of Natal had raised £1058 for this fund; Transvaal £602, Western Division £700, Eastern Division £826 and Central Division £241.³⁵

A magnificent donation of £892.10 came from Rising Star Lodge,

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- 31. PMC 14/1/3 Phoenix Lodge, Minute Book, 13 January 1919 - 11 March, 1923: Meeting, 16 July, 1921.
 - 32. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 1 November, 1920, p. 13.
 - 33. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 12 September, 1923, p. 15.
 - 34. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p. 170 (J.W. Stubbs: Last 50 Years).
 - 35. G.J. Grenfell (ed.): Centenary, DGL Natal, EC, 1882 - 1982, pp. 37 - 38.



The front of Lodge De Goede Hoop, Cape Town,
- established in 1772.



The imposing structure of Pinelands Masonic Centre,
Cape Town, the home of the Western Division of the
English Constitution. It is built in the shape of
two triangles, the triangle being a masonic symbol.

Bloemfontein, which qualified, as a result, as the first Hall Stone Lodge in South Africa - the Hall Stone Jewel being worn by the Master of the lodge. Each town member of Rising Star was indebted for £10.10 and each country member £5.5. To ensure early recognition the lodge borrowed the full sum locally and sent it to London. By 1931, because of the depression, it was still asking members for outstanding contributions and eventually paid the balance from lodge funds.³⁶

WORLD DEPRESSION

The worldwide depression from 1929 had a serious effect on the South African economy - prices of wool and maize fell, the diamond trade collapsed, exports shrank while the gold mining industry was crippled by increased taxes, export subsidies and import duties. The number of people on relief works rose from 4123 in 1929 to 30613 in 1933. In addition South Africa was hit by two disastrous droughts - in 1932 and 1933.³⁷ Freemasons were numbered among the unfortunate but many were ready to help. Eastern Division English District Grand Master, J.A. Duff, told his members in September, 1931 with the depression at its height: "Here in our Masonic District we know that a large part of the rural population are contending with troublous conditions owing to the falling markets of the world giving them insufficient return for what they have to offer, and they have difficulty in facing the situation in which they find themselves today."³⁸

36. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years, pp. 75 - 76.

37. C.W.G. Schumann: Structural Changes in South Africa 1806 - 1936, p. 248; C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 408 - 409 (B.J. Liebenberg: From the Statute of Westminster to the Republic of South Africa 1931 - 1961); C.W. de Kiewiet: History of South Africa, pp. 172 - 174.

38. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 9 September, 1931, p. 16.

"Nor is the position much different in urban areas. Homes that a few months ago seemed secure in comfort and happiness are today filled with anxiety as to the immediate future, if not the actual present. The amount of unemployment is so serious that abnormal steps have to be taken to grapple with it and the appeal on all hands is for honourable work to provide for homes and families."³⁹

"Cannot we as a body minister in some measure to the relief of distress in Port Elizabeth?", he added, urging lodges to donate to the Mayor's Emergency Fund.⁴⁰ In Johannesburg, the English District Grand Master, G.S. Burt Andrews, also appealed for members to give to the Mayor's Distress Fund, adding: "a cloud of depression is hanging over our country".⁴¹

The years 1931 and 1932 brought lodge membership figures tumbling. Transvaal English Division, with 2638 members in good standing, recorded 2526 in 1931 and 2496 in 1932.⁴² The smaller English Central Division reported lodges were having a difficult time in the 1930s, membership falling from 512 in 1929 to 432 in 1933.⁴³ The Cape Eastern Province was hard hit, the English masons there decreasing in numbers from 1878 in good standing in 1929 to 1533 in 1932.⁴⁴ The district suffered even more when 202 members were transferred to the newly created North Eastern District in January, 1932 which was renamed the Province of the Orange Free State and Basutoland in 1935.⁴⁵

Scottish Freemasons in the Transvaal fell in numbers from 2917 in 1928 to 2597 in 1936.⁴⁶

39. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 9 September, 1931, p. 16.

40. Ibid., p. 17.

41. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 30 April, 1932, p. 28.

42. TEA DGL TVL EC Returns: 1931, 1932.

43. KEA DGL CD EC Returns: 1930, 1934.

44. DGL ED EC Returns: 1929, 1932.

45. Ibid., Returns: 1932, 1935.

46. TSA DGL TVL SC Returns: 1928, 1936.

The South African Masonic Journal offered free advertisements to masons seeking work. Its issue of February, 1934 carried two typical pleas for help: "Clerical or other work urgently needed by brother of 30 years' standing discharged without pension from railways ... in fact, any work", wrote V. Lymbery of Pretoria. "Middle-aged brother seeks employment", read another.⁴⁷

CONFIDENCE RETURNS

On 20 September, 1931 Britain announced she had left the gold standard because of extreme pressure on the pound, but the South African Government under Prime Minister J.B.M. Hertzog at first declined to follow her example. There was strong criticism about South Africa having to imitate Britain's course in the world money markets. Doubting South Africa's ability to remain on the gold standard, many citizens sent out large sums of money, again weakening the country's already pressed economic situation. Despite currency control measures, the outflow of capital continued while the overvaluation of the South African pound bolstered local prices to unrealistic levels compared to world prices.

Eventually the government conceded and, on 27 December, 1932, announced South Africa had left the gold standard. Immediately the outflow of capital reversed, credit and confidence returned to the economy and the gold mining industry, boosted by investors, was able to begin vast expansion with consequent diversified development in the Transvaal, and South Africa soon enjoyed budget surpluses and was able to repay an £8 million war debt to Britain.⁴⁸

At masonic lodge level, this return of prosperity raised

47. S.A. Masonic Journal, February, 1934, p. 8.

48. C.W. de Kiewiet: History of South Africa, pp. 173 -177.

problems. "With the great expansion that took place on the West Rand when the Government decided to go off the gold standard, our municipal councillors decided to embark on the long projected scheme of building a Town Hall", reports J. McDowall, historian of Roodepoort Lodge in the Transvaal.⁴⁹ "Regrettably, the council had been using the Masonic Hall for many years and its decision ended the hall's usefulness to the public". Accordingly the lodge decided to sell the hall for £3000 in 1937 and build a new one.⁵⁰

"Now that economic conditions appear to have improved I should like to see a systematic effort made to increase our membership by seeking out and securing the return of Brethren who have dropped out in the last few years", urged T.N. Cranstoun-Day, District Grand Master of the English lodges in the Western Division.⁵¹ But he noted 135 members had resigned or been excluded in the previous year and membership stood at 1874 compared to 1882 in 1934.⁵² However, the better times were reflected in his division's membership of 1910 in 1936, of 1943 in 1937, of 1970 in 1938 and 1973 in 1939.⁵³ Surprisingly, the English Transvaal division, by the outbreak of war, recorded slight losses in membership dropping from 2520 in 1936 to 2501 in 1939.⁵⁴ In contrast, the Netherlandic Transvaal Province membership rose from 540 in 1936 to 701 in 1939 and the English Natal Division from 1791 in 1936 to 1826 in 1939.⁵⁵

49. J. McDowall: History of Roodepoort Lodge, p. 7.

50. Ibid.

51. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1936, p. 13.

52. Ibid., pp. 12 - 27.

53. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1940, Returns, p. 34.

54. TEA DGL TVL EC Returns: 1936, 1940.

55. PGL TVL NC Returns: 1936, 1939; NEA DGL Natal EC Returns: 1936, 1939.

BOUNDARY CHANGES

Confusion over English masonic boundaries in South Africa led in 1935 to the appointment by London of Deputy Grand Registrar, H.B. Vaisey, K.C. to determine future areas of jurisdiction, the Free State being the most contentious, where both the Cape and Natal had jurisdiction over several lodges. In his report submitted to Grand Lodge in 1936 Vaisey said of the then existing six districts - the Western Division comprised 32 lodges with an aggregate of about 1880, the Eastern Division had 41 lodges with 1670 members, the Central Division, which included the Northern Cape, had 13 lodges and 441 members, Natal 41 lodges and 1800 members, Transvaal 63 lodges and 2870 members and the North Eastern Division, formed in 1932, 6 lodges and 216 members.⁵⁶ Boundaries, he found, were not clearly defined but they were necessary as the "creation of the Union, instead of obliterating, has in some respects even accentuated the provincial and other local loyalties, predilections and, it may be prejudices, within its borders".⁵⁷ After hearing evidence in Bloemfontein in August, 1935 from masonic leaders, he recommended primarily that the North Eastern Division should become the Orange Free State Division with Basutoland and that its name should be changed to "Orange Free State", while he defined the boundaries more clearly.⁵⁸ Lodges meeting in this area but under the control of other divisions could chose to remain or move to the Free State.⁵⁹

These "provincial loyalties" - centrifugal forces within the Union - Vaisey referred to, were also causing stresses

56. KEA, H.B. Vaisey: Report on Boundaries and Districts in South Africa, 1936, para II (typed MSS).

57. Ibid., para III.

58. Ibid., para VIII.

59. Ibid., para VII.

in the fabric of Irish Freemasonry in South Africa. Since 1912 the then three lodges in Cape Town - St. Patrick, Killarney and Excelsior - had pressed for a Provincial Grand Lodge in the Cape.⁶⁰ However, Sir Kendal Franks, Provincial Grand Master for the whole of South Africa, resident in Johannesburg, opposed the suggestion on the grounds of economy.⁶¹

In 1918, the three lodges petitioned the Grand Master of Ireland direct and approached other constitutions for support. Dublin was told that the seat of the Provincial Grand Lodge in the Transvaal was 1000 miles away from Cape Town and there was a "diversity of local conditions" between the Transvaal and the Cape.⁶² But Dublin refused and the Cape Town organising committee then complained Irish Freemasonry was being neglected and in danger of being forgotten.⁶³ Its secretary, A.T. Penman, later travelled to London to meet the Earl of Donoughmore, then Grand Master, and reported back: "Their (The Grand Lodge) mind is made up and you know how difficult it is to move an Irishman when his mind is made up".⁶⁴ The committee persisted and in 1924 won the support of a leading Irish mason, Colonel Sharman Crawford while visiting South Africa. It emphasised that "people in the two centres (Cape Town and Johannesburg) have not, and cannot be expected to have, any close community of interests except when questions of great national importance arise".⁶⁵

Crawford dutifully saw the Grand Master on his return, and persuaded him to change his mind. He came back to this country to constitute the new Provincial Grand Lodge of

60. PGL S.Cape IC, Formation PGL File: Report, 3 March, 1914.

61. Ibid., Franks - Committee, 2 April, 1914.

62. Ibid., Committee meeting, 17 September, 1918.

63. Ibid., Committee - Grand Lodge, 14 October, 1919.

64. Ibid., Penman - Committee, 2 January, 1920.

65. Ibid., Committee - Crawford, 10 April, 1924.

Southern Cape on 15 April, 1925 and install the Rev. F.O.M. Watters as the first Provincial Grand Master.⁶⁶

The new Irish South Cape Province stretched from the mouth of the Orange River east along the south of Griqualand from the Free State and then along the south boundary of Natal to the East Coast. The remainder of the country fell under the Transvaal's jurisdiction.⁶⁷ Another separation in Irish Freemasonry occurred when the Provincial Grand Lodge of Natal was formed on 1 July, 1932 with eight lodges under Provincial Grand Master W. Owen-Roberts, leaving the northern province in charge of Irish lodges in the Transvaal and Free State.⁶⁸

"WELDING OF RACES"

Despite the injunction among Masons not to discuss politics, masonic leaders openly welcomed the political coalition of the South African Party and the National Party in 1933 led by Hertzog and Smuts. They saw it as "welding after much tribulation of the two races (Afrikaans and English-speaking) in one", wrote a masonic commentator, Capt. Stanley Ress.⁶⁹

The political rapprochement was welcomed by the head of the Dutch Lodges, C.C. Silberbauer, who referred to the "gradual disappearance of racial differences and the adjustment of former cleavages in the State. We are all thankful that a further advance towards national harmony has

66. PGL S.Cape IC, Formation PGL File: Constitution PGL Southern Cape ceremony, 15 April, 1925.

67. Ibid., Crawford - Grand Master, 11 May, 1925.

68. NIA PGL Natal IC, Minute Book, 1 July, 1932 - 7 December, 1957: meeting, 1 July, 1932.

69. S.A. Masonic Journal, May 1935, pp. 47 - 55 (Captain Stanley Ress: Quarter of a Century of Union).

been apparent during the past 12 months. I did not however claim that the restoration of harmony between the great white races of South Africa had been an achievement of Masonry ... I am proudly convinced that it (Freemasonry) has contributed its share towards the happy consummation".⁷⁰

"The establishment of goodwill between the political leaders and the cordial manner in which they are backed up by the majority of the South African people seem to us to afford an opportunity for Freemasonry in the country that has never occurred before", wrote Editor William Moister of the South African Masonic Journal, the only masonic publication existing in South Africa at the time.

"It seemed almost hopeless only a short while ago that the evil spirit of racial and political prejudice could be exorcised. Members of lodges ... could always do a little to mitigate the acuteness of religious and political differences and we would dearly love to believe that masons have not altogether been idle in bringing about a happier state of affairs".⁷¹

No doubt as a step to accelerate this "welding" of the races and make Freemasonry truly bilingual, the Netherlandic Constitution took the initiative in South Africa in introducing an Afrikaans ritual into its lodges following the official constitution of Afrikaans as one of the two official languages in South Africa in 1925.

In the first Dutch lodges, De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw, Dutch had been the language of ritual, to be replaced by English following the British occupation of the Cape. The English ritual had been translated from the Netherlands.

70. PGL (Tvl excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 8 September, 1934, p. 121.

71. S.A. Masonic Journal, June, 1933, editorial, p. 13.

In 1925 Free State lodges persuaded the Dutch Deputy Grand Master, C.C. Silberbauer, to order the printing of an Afrikaans translation of the ritual direct from the original Nederlands.⁷² A member, Senator F.W. Reitz, had already volunteered to act as translator but as few lodges wanted the ritual, it was not printed.⁷³ Five years later, the official Afrikaans ritual was announced which "reflects in every respect the Afrikaans language in its best and finest form", Silberbauer told his southern Provincial Grand Lodge in 1929.⁷⁴ He recognised some practical difficulties in its use. "With the exception of two lodges in the Transvaal employing Nederlands and one lodge in the Cape (Zur Eintracht) using German, all our workings are at present conducted in English ... in every lodge most Brethren are conversant with Afrikaans as used colloquially; but many of them are not yet sufficiently versed in it as a language for the purpose of expressing themselves efficiently in the parts they have to take in our solemn ceremonies. Neither in the present nor at any future time should their limitations adversely affect them. If this happens the bonds of Brotherhood will soon be rent asunder. Until a lodge is so constituted that Afrikaans can be freely used at its ceremonies there will have to be a brotherly compromise. In any instance where an officer is not proficient in Afrikaans let him conduct his portion of the work in English and let the others render their parts in Afrikaans. For my part I look to all our lodges eventually becoming bilingual".⁷⁵ He paid tribute to J.J. du Toit and C.J. van Brakel, both English masons from Stellenbosch Lodge, who had translated the ritual.⁷⁶

The first lodge in the Cape Province to use Afrikaans in its

72. PGL TVL NC Reports: Meeting, 31 August, 1925, p. 15.

73. PGL (Tvl excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 30 August, 1924, p. 9.

74. PGL (Tvl excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 9 September, 1929, p. 12.

75. Ibid., p. 14.

76. Ibid., p. 25.

ceremonies was Jacob de Mist, consecrated in Cape Town in November, 1931 in the Netherlandic Constitution. Die Voortrekker Losie was the only lodge in the Transvaal in those years using Afrikaans. De Broederband at Pretoria and Eendracht Maakt Macht at Johannesburg both used High Dutch.⁷⁷

The other three constitutions turned to their Grand Lodges for advice as the pressure for greater use of Afrikaans in lodge ceremonial grew in the 1930s. In September, 1932 the English Grand Lodge ruled it could not sanction the use of Afrikaans in an English Lodge in South Africa.⁷⁸ In 1935 petitioners for an English lodge at Steynsrust asked if Afrikaans could be used. The English Grand Lodge, granting the petition, ruled that, if a candidate were not fully acquainted with English, it would be permissible for the master to give the obligation "the words to be spoken sentence by sentence, first in English and then in Afrikaans and the candidate to repeat them in both languages".⁷⁹

ATTACKS ON FREEMASONRY

While the question of bilingualism was taxing the minds of masonic leaders, they were facing further pressures from the Dutch Reformed Church and watching with concern the eradication of Freemasonry in Italy and Germany.

These influences may have prevented a repetition in South Africa of the immediate postwar rush to join the Order.

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77. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC, Correspondence 1938 - 1942: Van Praagh - Cranstoun-Day, 13 March, 1939 with copy letter Van Praagh - UGL, 30 January, 1932.
78. PMC 2/1/9 DGM WD EC, Correspondence 1945 - 1946: DGM WD - DGM OFS, 19 September, 1945.
79. PMC 2/1/5 DGM WD EC, Correspondence 1930 - 1935: GS - DGS WD, 10 December, 1935.

In contrast, worldwide English Freemasonry could boast of 60 new lodges being formed every year from 1930 to 1939, with an average of 15,500 new masons yearly.⁸⁰

Since the late 1800s, the Craft in South Africa had aroused bitter outspoken opposition from the orthodox sections of the Dutch Reformed Church which regarded Freemasonry as a secret society intent on replacing the church in the task of improving mankind. To them, the Craft was seen as a dangerous "liberalising" influence, writes Hanekom. Freemasonry was condemned for pursuing the path of Deism, for recognising God as the Maker of the Universe but not Christ the Saviour who came to redeem mankind. As a result of its deistic attitudes Freemasonry welcomed Jews, Mohammedans, in fact it allied itself with paganism, while at the same time it preached the doctrines of equality of mankind whose roots could be found in the French Revolution. Its "pagan" and "revolutionary" practices had been allied in the clerical mind to the anglicising policies in the late 1800s of the Cape administration, equally seen as a danger to the Dutch culture, language and church.⁸¹

In the first half of the 19th century it was considered good taste to belong to a masonic lodge and of value as being a link with the leading figures in government and court. Sir John Truter, J.H. Neethling, Sir Christoffel Brand, all masons, were among those in high places who exerted wide influence, especially on the religious life of the colony.⁸²

As its influence penetrated more widely to all circles of Cape activities it came under more critical survey by the orthodox church, particularly after the Wurtenberg incident

80. J. Hamill, Asst. UGLE Librarian: Statistics English Freemasonry 1912 - 1945, letter to writer, 10 November, 1981.

81. T.N. Hanekom: Die Liberale Rigting in Suid Afrika, pp. 150 - 151.

82. Ibid., p. 15.

in Germany in 1856 when 51 church leaders had asked that church pastors should be prohibited from becoming Freemasons.⁸³

Church dislike for Freemasonry had been expressed in the Cape since the start of De Goede Hoop Lodge in 1772 and it helped to bring about its demise in 1781.⁸⁴ It had, however, been muted to some extent since that time until it assumed full voice at the synod of the newly-organized Dutch Reformed Church which met at Cape Town in October, 1862. The Rev. Andrew Murray, Junior, was elected Moderator.⁸⁵

On the 14th day of the synod delegates discussed whether the seminary should move from Stellenbosch to Cape Town. On 29 October, 1962, the Rev. G.W.A. van der Lingen of Paarl rose to speak. The S.A. Commercial Advertiser reported that Van Der Lingen said he felt that, if the Stellenbosch seminary were removed to Cape Town, "the youths would fall into the snares of the clique of Freemasons ... there might be one or two places of bad name in Stellenbosch but there were scores of such in Cape Town. There might be one or two stray Freemasons in Stellenbosch but it was wellknown there was no city on earth so completely under the influence of Freemasonry as Cape Town".⁸⁶

The Rev. A. Kotze of Darling called Van Der Lingen to order, claiming he had ridiculed and condemned Freemasonry. Cape Town was not under the influence of Freemasonry, Kotze said, adding that "the brotherly love of that body was stronger, if not more generous, than that shown within the precincts of the synod itself".⁸⁷

83. T.N. Hanekom: Die Liberale Rigting in Suid Afrika, p. 273.

84. A.A. Cooper: Origin and Growth of Freemasonry in South Africa 1772 - 1876, p. 30 (unpublished MA Thesis).

85. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1862, p. 5.

86. S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 30 October, 1962, "D.R.C. Synod", p. 2.

87. The Cape Argus, 30 October, 1862, "D.R.C. Synod".

The Rev. M. Krige, who denied he was a "mason or a liberal", objected to Van Der Lingen's remarks, claiming his attack "was especially unjustifiable when it was remembered that several ministers from the synod had studied from funds provided by various masonic lodges".⁸⁸

The synod eventually decided not to move the seminary from Stellenbosch and in its final resolution avoided all mention of Freemasonry while its official records also omitted any reference to the Craft.⁸⁹

In 1869, in a defence of Freemasonry against church criticism, the Deputy Grand Master of the Netherlands Constitution, Sir Christoffel Brand, observed that several D.R.C. ministers had been members of De Goede Hoop Lodge. He pointed out that discussion on sectarian or dogmatical subjects was forbidden in lodges. "We form no church: religion, morality and love are the groundwork of our labours and the aim of our actions, because by that we promote the happiness of mankind. Why then should the clergy, and particularly those of the Dutch Reformed Church, act so hostilely against us?", he asked.⁹⁰

He reported at one of his lodges in the Transvaal a D.R.C. clergyman had been asked by masons to open proceedings with a prayer. Later he was charged before his church vestry and brought before a presbytery for "daring to pray for us to the Almighty", but he was discharged and escorted home by masons in procession.⁹¹

"Worse happened at Potchefstroom", said Brand, for the

88. The Cape Argus, 30 October, 1862, "D.R.C. Synod".

89. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1862, pp. 36 - 37.

90. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 14 August, 1869, p. 4.

91. Ibid.

minister there "has thought fit to fall foul of masonry". He had preached a "tremendous anathema" against the Craft; denouncing it as a curse and claiming its adherents were "calumniators of God, infidels and had ceased to be Christians".⁹² Brand hoped the ministers would soon lose their prejudices against the Craft.⁹³

Another attack came on 14 October, 1915, when the 23rd synod of the Cape church considered a resolution by Ds. W.J. Naudé that it approve a principle that people who were in spirit opposed to the church, such as Freemasons and Catholics, should not be appointed as Elders and Deacons of Church Councils. An amendment that the church law not be changed was approved by a narrow margin in the morning by 111 to 108. However, in the afternoon, the synod accepted unanimously a motion by Ds. A.M. McGregor that the decision taken that morning in connection with the resolution should not be interpreted that the Church is in favour of Freemasonry or the serving of Freemasons on Church Councils.⁹⁴

Freemasonry had its champion at this synod in the person of the Rev. G.F.C. van Lingen of Cathcart who countered many of the indictments against Freemasonry put forward by Ds. Naudé, when moving his resolution. Naudé had claimed Freemasonry interfered with church discipline because masons had to swear an oath to assist each other except in case of murder or high treason while masonic ceremonies were counter to the teaching of the Church. He also criticised members of his Church who sent their children to Roman Catholic schools.⁹⁵

According to an editorial in The S.A. Masonic Journal,

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- 92. CA Unlisted PGL NC Reports: Meeting, 14 August, 1869, p. 5.
 - 93. Ibid.
 - 94. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1915, pp. 41 - 42.
 - 95. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 November, 1915, p. 167.

commenting on the synod, the Rev. Van Lingen replied to Ds. Naudé, pointing out he was no Freemason himself but counted many friends among that body. He added that the Roman Catholics were the greatest opponents Freemasonry had to contend with "and therefore if Mr. Naudé wished the children to be inoculated with anti-masonic sentiment, the best thing to do would be to encourage their attendance at Catholic schools".⁹⁶

The journal added: "It is refreshing to find that, out of 218 members of the synod, 111 exhibited commonsense and viewed matters not immediately connected with their church sanely and without the intolerant bigotry with which many of their number would appear to be impregnated".⁹⁷

Meeting in Pretoria, the D.R.C. Transvaal Synod in April, 1931, by 129 votes to 29, condemned Freemasonry and strongly urged members of its community to have nothing to do with masonic lodges. The Synod was considering a commission's report which concluded: "That the God of the Freemasons is not the Father of Jesus Christ; that Freemasonry proceeds from the recognition of the inherent nobility of human nature and of the inherent power of man to bring himself a stage nearer perfection while the Holy Scripture teaches the sinfulness of human nature and of redemption only through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ".⁹⁸

The commission recommended that members should not join Freemasonry and that masons should not be members of church councils. However "most of the predikants who took part in the subsequent discussions disapproved of the report and its findings", reported The Rand Daily Mail.⁹⁹

96. S.A. Masonic Journal, 30 November, 1915, p. 167.

97. Ibid.

98. NGK Acta Transvaalse Kerk Synodi: 1931, p. 134; The Rand Daily Mail, 11 April, 1931, "D.R.Church and Freemasons", p. 7.

99. NGK Acta Transvaalse Kerk Synodi: 1931, p. 74; The Rand Daily Mail, 11 April, 1931, "D.R. Church and Freemasons", p. 7.

Many members of Church Councils and many ministers of the Presbyterian Church were Freemasons, claimed the Rev. H.R. Barrish of Mooi River.¹⁰⁰

Concern about church criticism was expressed indirectly by masonic leaders. Head of the English lodges in the Eastern Division, J.C.A. Duff, told his members in 1931: "There are those wielding great power since they minister to the souls and welfare of their people who for some unexplained reason are antagonistic to us as a body though we are not in any way antagonistic to them. I sympathise most deeply with any of our Brethren who have been perplexed by the wholly unwarranted attacks made upon our Order, which attack, of course, is conceived in ignorance for, were there knowledge, their attitude would be impossible. My counsel is to be patient under the provocation which is so undeserving, of harsh and cruel criticism, and to prove this in everyday life".¹⁰¹

"Take no notice of the church resolution", District Grand Master of the English Transvaal lodges, G.S. Burt Andrews, told his members.¹⁰²

Freemasonry was again discussed in the Cape Church Synod when it met in October and November, 1932. The Rev. Dr. G.T. Kikillus of Barrydale said he would have no grudge against the movement if it confined itself to philanthropic activities. "But the lodge was more and more becoming a rival to the church. It had a creed of its own, viz. 'I believe in God, the Great Architect'. This created the impression among the less informed that such a creed was enough and that the specifically Christian element was superfluous".¹⁰³

100. The Rand Daily Mail, 11 April, 1931, "D.R.Church and Freemasons", p. 7.

101. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 9 September, 1931, p. 17.

102. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 25 April, 1931, p. 23.

103. The Cape Times, 16 November, 1932, "Lodge Rivalling Church".

He and the Rev. S.F. Feneysey proposed: "Seeing that Freemasonry has religious aspirations which take no note of Jesus Christ as our one and only Saviour, the Synod strongly disapproves of the association of members of the Dutch Reformed Church with this movement".¹⁰⁴

Exception was taken to this by several members, the Rev. P.B.Ackermann of New Church, Cape Town, proposing an amendment: "Seeing that Freemasonry is a social and not a religious organisation and accepts members without any consideration of religious beliefs, the Synod does not wish to express itself about this movement".¹⁰⁵

The Rev. G.J. Barnardt of Barkly East said the Synod should be careful about a movement about which it lacked knowledge. He knew of eminent Christians who had belonged to Freemasonry. No Church was injured in the least by the movement. He was supported by Elder S.H. du Plessis of Grahamstown who admitted he was a Freemason. He had been hurt by the remarks of Dr. Kikillus for the movement had brought him where he stood today. It was a great philanthropic association which was doing a great work for the nation.¹⁰⁶

The Synod finally accepted by a large majority on 15 November, 1932, a resolution by Rev. F.J.B. Malan of Graaff-Reinet and Elder S.H. du Plessis that: "Seeing that the Synod does not bear sufficient knowledge of Freemasonry it does not see its way clear to pronounce on the movement".¹⁰⁷

"According to our usual custom the attacks (by Dr. Kikillus) were ignored by the District authorities", commented the

104. The Cape Times, 16 November, 1932, "Lodge Rivalling Church"; NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1932, p. 237, "Vrymesselary".

105. The Cape Times, 16 November, 1932, "Lodge Rivalling Church".

106. Ibid.

107. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1932, p. 237, "Vrymesselary"

District Grand Master of English lodges in the Cape, T.N. Cranstoun-Day.¹⁰⁸ His injunction did not prevent a member of the church and a past master of Britannia Lodge, Paarl, J.O. Powell, to reply to letters by Kikillus published in Die Kerkbode of 1932 and 1933. In one the cleric set out to prove that Freemasonry was a religion.¹⁰⁹ In another he claimed Freemasonry demanded from its members a rejection of Christ as the Saviour and that hence Christianity and Freemasonry could not be reconciled.¹¹⁰

In a lively correspondence in Die Kerkbode Powell set out to refute these charges, pointing out that "Dr. Andrew Murray and Sir John Brand, to say nothing of the hundreds of ministers of the Anglican and other churches who are, or were Freemasons, had succeeded in reconciling their Christianity with their masonic labours".¹¹¹

Powell then invited the authorities of the church to relax their ban on Freemasonry so that its ministers who were desirous of becoming Freemasons might be initiated. If they found anything in the Craft to conflict with their civil, moral or religious duties, they would have perfect liberty to withdraw, he added.¹¹²

108. T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 146.

109. Die Kerkbode, 12 April, 1933, p. 680, "Vrymesselary is Godsdiens".

110. Die Kerkbode, 12 October, 1932, p. 688, "Vrymesselary en Geloof in Die Heer Jesus Christus"; PMC 2/1/5 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1930 - 1935: Powell - DGM WD 20 October, 1932, with translation of Dr. Kikillus's letter.

111. Die Kerkbode, 2 November, 1932, pp. 825 - 826; Dr. Andrew Murray was believed to have been initiated into Freemasonry at the defunct lodge Britannia at Wellington, date unknown. See PMC 2/1/5 DGM WD EC Correspondence: DGM - Powell, 8 January, 1934. Sir John Brand was initiated at De Goede Hoop Lodge, Cape Town, November, 1842. see O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 200.

112. S.A. Masonic Journal, July 1933, p. 14 (J.O. Powell: Freemasonry and the Dutch Reformed Church).

The masonic authorities continued in their policy of remaining aloof to these continual attacks. However, when these criticisms began to be felt in other circles, with some reluctance, the masonic leaders replied. The Citrus Lodge, Clanwilliam, reported that the Clanwilliam School Board had resolved on 20 February, 1938 that: "Die Raad wil dit alle onderwysers in hierdie afdeling op hie hart bind dat die aansluit van onderwysers by die vrymesselaars beweging nie die guns van die raad wegdra nie".¹¹³

All teachers were duly circularised as follows:

"Op die jongste vergadering van die raad is besluit die volgende onder die aandag van alle Onderwysers van die Raad te bring".¹¹⁴

Quoting this instruction, heads of the four masonic constitutions wrote to the Superintendent-General of Education at Cape Town, Dr. W. de Vos Malan: "The Fraternity of Freemasons holding under the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, Scotland and the Netherlands is not a 'movement' but a very ancient spiritual, benevolent, charitable and social Institution entirely divorced from politics, which has existed for hundreds of years throughout the British Empire, the United States of America, in Holland and other parts of the world, and only as recently as June last His Majesty, The King, who is a Past Grand Master, presided over a special assembly of Freemasons in London. The President of the United States, the Kings of Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Greece are members, and Her Majesty, the Queen of Holland, has on several occasions graciously recognised the Order."¹¹⁵

Distinguished ecclesiastics of religions other than the

113. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: Masonic leaders - Supt. General of Education, 9 March, 1938, p. 1.

114. Ibid.

115. Ibid.

Roman Catholic, judges, men in high positions in official and commercial life are members of the Order, as also were Presidents Burgers, Brand, Pretorius and Reitz.

"We do not seek publicity in our benevolent work, but large amounts are annually contributed in grants and pensions and the work of the South African Masonic Education Fund with its school and University scholarships, and so ably presided over by Professor C.E. Lewis, LL.D., should be well known. Of this Fund every Governor and Governor-General of South Africa has been a Patron.¹¹⁶

"The action taken by the Clanwilliam School Board is not only an unwarranted interference with individual liberty, containing as it does an implied threat of penalisation, but is also, by implication, an aspersion upon an ancient and honourable Institution, and may form a precedent which will have incalculable repercussions.

"We respectfully ask you to exercise your powers to secure the immediate withdrawal of the circular issued to the Teachers, and the expungement of the resolution from the Minutes of the School Board.¹¹⁷

"We shall be only too pleased to give you all possible information in our power should you afford us the privilege of an interview, but we most respectfully urge the importance of promptness in dealing with this matter, as the rights and liberties of several members are being interfered with, and their personal careers jeopardised by the palpable threat conveyed in this arbitrary action of the Clanwilliam School Board", they added.¹¹⁸

116. DGM - Supt.Gen. Education, 9 March, 1938, p. 1.

117. Ibid., p. 2.

118. Ibid.

Dr. De Vos Malan informed the masonic authorities that the Board had explained that its resolution of 1 February was not a threat but the "personal conviction of the majority" and that it was now revoked.¹¹⁹

This was the first recorded instance of the masonic authorities in South Africa replying in public to criticism. However, in 1940, after the Synodical Commission of the Dutch Reformed Church (Cape) had made "astounding allegations" about Freemasonry, the leaders of the four constitutions issued a 76-page review refuting the charges and underlining the report's alleged inconsistencies and errors.¹²⁰ (See Chapter X)

PERSECUTION IN EUROPE

The prospect of world disarmament talks in 1932 spurred the Grand East of the Netherlands to circularise from The Hague all lodges under its jurisdiction calling on them to support the movement towards peace. Lodges were asked to resolve and sign three copies of a printed resolution which read that the lodge "having regard to the fact that, previously in 1871, the said Grand East declared that:

"(1) differences between nations must be settled by peaceful means and not through the force of arms;

"(2) it is the duty of every Freemason to spread this conviction and cause it to be accepted by society;

"is still of the opinion that, in the name of humanity and culture, the world has to be saved from the horrors of war;

"considering that peace between the different nations cannot be maintained unless bounds are set to the race for armaments;

119. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence: 1938 - 1942; Supt. General - DGM, 19 April, 1938.

120. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Review of Report on Synodical Commission of Dutch Reformed Church (Cape) on Freemasonry, 1942, Preface.

"rejoices that, at least in 1932, an attempt will be made to arrive at the object by International Agreement; "records hereby its profound conviction that, for the well-being of humanity, it is absolutely imperative that the International Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations will conduce to a convention, accepted by all Nations, whereby will be definitely initiated the restriction and reduction of armaments".¹²¹

The Grand East of the Netherlands was supported by its representative in South Africa, Deputy Grand Master C.C. Silberbauer, who told the 1933 annual meeting in Bloemfontein: "The call to help the world is clear and definite to each one of us for we are members of a Constitution which, according to its Grand Statutes, teaches as the first duty of man devotion to, if required, self-sacrifice in the interests of the well-being of the community. It seeks that which unites men and nations and tries to remove that which disunites the minds and souls of men".¹²²

As in previous world emergencies, noted in earlier chapters, the United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland took no part in this European masonic movement to encourage disarmament, remaining firmly to their injunction not to participate in political affairs. Their European masonic brethren, however had little option. They became unwillingly part of the political scene as victims of anti-masonic oppression.

Freemasonry in Europe had long been condemned by the Roman Catholic Church, from the famous Bull of Excommunication

121. GEN GE Netherlands: Circular, 24 September, 1931.

122. PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 4 September, 1933, p. 28.

issued by Pope Clement XII in 1738. A succession of papal pronouncements since that year had continued to stress church opposition.¹²³ However, in the 1920s and 1930s, it was the turn of the political, rather than the religious, leaders to oppress Freemasons.

Overthrowing the government of Italy by force in 1921, Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini took immediate action against Freemasons who had opposed his illegal usurpation of authority. From 1921 his Blackshirts arrested thousands and deported them to the Lipari Islands where many died. Their Grand Master Domizio Torrigiani, after five years' imprisonment, died on his release in 1932. By 1925 the movement, which had had under its Grand Lodge 500 lodges and 25,000 members, had ceased to exist.¹²⁴

"A great agitation has been initiated against Freemasonry", District Grand Master of the Dutch lodges in the Transvaal, U.B.M. Vogts, told members in 1927. "It started in Italy on the pretext of political activities being exercised by the Fraternity. It is encroaching on, and developing in Central Europe; anti-semitism and political factors play their part in a campaign which is led by men of high standing in the political and social world. Our revered customs, our rites and ceremonies are exposed to coarse deprecating, jeering language and held up to scorn. We are banded as useless hypocrites of the vilest influence with our so-called efforts to rule the world by an international consortium of stateless unscrupulous adventurers".¹²⁵

Among the "men of high standing" leading the anti-masonic campaign in Europe was General Erich Ludendorff, a leading

123. S.A. Masonic Journal, April, 1945, p. 20.

124. S.A. Masonic Journal, May, 1933, p. 8; *Ibid.*, March 1943, p. 8.

125. PGL TVL NC Reports: Meeting, 20 August, 1927, p. 41.

German general during the first World War. As a self-styled apostle of a "Nordic" religion, he conducted a personal vendetta against masons, Jesuits, Jews and Marxists blaming them for the first World War, the ensuing German revolution and other world ills.¹²⁶ He and his wife, Chairwoman of the Tannenberg Bund, whose aim was also to destroy Freemasonry, organised anti-masonic demonstrations, preceding Hitler in his dislike of the Craft.¹²⁷ Vogts, leader of the Dutch Transvaal lodges, was forced to comment in 1934: "Our arch enemy Ludendorff of Germany in his mad hate of his, and his even madder wife, arranged for a performance of our so-called 3rd degree on a public stage in Munich and it is significant of the mentality of those who witnessed this monstrous attempt of misrepresentation of what after all belongs to other people that it elicited shrieks of hysterical laughter from the gallery mob included in the audience".¹²⁸

Hitler took office as Chancellor on 30 January, 1933. Dissolution of all masonic lodges in Germany and their reformation on a National Socialist-Christian basis was announced from Berlin on 19 April, 1933 by the new National Grand Lodge. There were believed to be about 100,000 masons in 700 lodges under ten Grand Lodges in Germany before then. Following the order dissolving German masonic lodges in 1933, the German Grand Lodges established new Christian National orders which severed all connections with Freemasonry, abolishing the terms "Lodge", "Freemasonry" and masonic rituals, and evicting non-Aryans, making themselves over into "German national" movements with a symbolic basis in the ancient Nordic Wotan Cult.¹²⁹

Hitler's edict had effect in South West Africa where the

126. E. Lennhoff: The Freemasons, pp. 326 - 334; Encyclopaedia Britannica 14, pp. 402 - 403 (N. Barclay: Ludendorff, Erich).

127. S.A. Masonic Journal, September, 1933, p. 32; Ibid., October, 1941, p. 2.

128. PGL TVL NC Reports: Meeting, 25 August, 1932, p. 27.

129. E. Lennhoff: The Freemasons, pp. 220 - 221.

three German lodges in that territory - Zur Hoffnung in Swakopmund, Zum Kreuz Des Suedens in Windhoek and Kaiser Friedrich III in Luderitz, found themselves in a difficult position as their Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, was forced into the newly-constituted Nazi-decreed National Grand Lodge. As a result "a rift of outlook and loyalty appeared between the brethren" of these South West African lodges.¹³⁰ Approaches by the three lodges to join the Grand Lodge of England proved fruitless while Hamburg recommended they join the Grand Lodge in Buenos Aires. However, all these attempts to save the lodges came to nothing. The last masonic meeting of Zur Hoffnung in Swakopmund was held on 5 September, 1933.¹³¹

In Germany, masons, if they admitted their membership, found themselves penalised. They were not eligible for appointment to the public service and disqualified from holding office in the National-Socialist Party, the Storm Troops and the Labour Party.¹³² Some masons were murdered or imprisoned and their properties confiscated. Temples were looted and their contents carried off to Berlin and exhibited in the anti-masonic exhibition which was opened in 1937 by the Reich Minister of Information, Dr. Joseph Goebbels.¹³³

In Czeckoslovakia, the entry of Hitler in 1938 brought an end to Freemasonry, destroying two Grand Lodges which controlled 60 lodges and 2600 members.¹³⁴ In Austria Freemasonry was abolished by Hitler on 17 March, 1938. Grand Lodge officers were jailed, with 90 per cent of the members put in the Dachau concentration camp. Before Hitler came, there were 20 lodges with 1500 members in Austria.¹³⁵

130. Anon.: History of Lodge Hoffnung, (typed MSS).

131. Ibid.

132. S.A. Masonic Journal, August, 1937, p. 41.

133. S.A. Masonic Journal, March, 1943, p. 8.

134. S.A. Masonic Journal, March, 1943, p. 8.

135. Ibid.

In Spain, General Franco purged the masonic movement, killing and torturing many. The pinnacle of savagery was reached when General Franco ordered the erection of six scaffolds and 80 masons slaughtered by means of the garrote.¹³⁶

In Yugoslavia, Turkey and Rumania government decrees banning Freemasonry were passed in attempts to appease Hitler.¹³⁷

The suppression of Portuguese Freemasonry in 1935 led to the closing down by the Government of a Scottish lodge, Friendship, at Lourenco Marques, Portuguese East Africa, after 13 years' existence. It had been visited often by South African masons. Deploring its closing, the S.A. Masonic Journal, in an editorial, hoped the friendship between brethren established by the lodge would "survive the rude shock of government action in suppressing open masonic activity".¹³⁸

But the full onslaught by the Axis on Freemasonry was only to be felt during the second World War when, in all, 34 Grand Lodges, having 2713 lodges with a total membership in excess of 235,356 members, were eliminated.¹³⁹

South African masons naturally expressed concern about events in Europe. "In certain parts of Europe Masonry has been made the victim of unrestrained persecution. Grand and subordinate lodges have been "dissolved" and individual masons threatened with loss of business, liberty and even of life ... May God grant that we may ever be spared from the animosities and contentions which in many parts of the world interrupt the progress of humanity and the cause of benevolence", T.N. Cranstoun-Day, head of

136. S.A. Masonic Journal, March, 1943, p. 9.

137. *Ibid.*, pp. 8 - 9.

138. S.A. Masonic Journal, July, 1935, p. 3.

139. S.A. Masonic Journal, March, 1943, p. 8.

the English Western Division, commented in 1937.¹⁴⁰

C.C. Silberbauer, head of the Dutch lodges in South Africa, acutely saw that events of the 1930s in Europe could be a danger to the political coalition of 1933 - and masonic harmony - in South Africa. "Deplorable waves of feeling induced by the chaotic conditions in which so large a portion of the world has been plunged have already engulfed masonry in certain countries and unfortunately show signs of extending further. Indeed they are even now lapping at our very shores. If they gain in strength their disruptive influence will destroy the union of hearts so recently achieved. Not masonry alone but our country itself will eventually be overwhelmed in disasters such as have befallen other parts of the world", he told members.¹⁴¹

SADNESS AND VISITORS

With few exceptions, masonic life in South Africa during the period between the two world wars continued to be untouched by events overseas. There were many events closer to home of more interest to the South African mason. The death in 1919 of the Prime Minister, General Botha, believed to be a mason, was mourned by South African lodges. "We all recognise the great work he has done for South Africa and the Empire", District Grand Master A.E. Gordon told his English Eastern Province lodges.¹⁴²

"In war, a chivalrous and courageous opponent; in Peace a trusty friend, a wise and able leader", commented the editor of the S.A. Masonic Journal, W. Moister, in his issue of September, 1919. Botha's life was based on masonic principles - Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, he added. "He never failed to promote it (Brotherly Love) whenever

140. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1937, p. 16.

141. PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 8 September, 1934, p. 121.

142. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 10 September, 1919, pp. 9 - 10.

possible between the two great races of this country".¹⁴³

In lodges members stood in silence in respect and lodge minutes recorded the loss.¹⁴⁴ General Botha's lodge cannot be traced but it could have been a Netherlandic Constitution lodge in the Transvaal. Early records are scanty, regrettably, but a distinguished masonic historian, O.H. Bate confirmed in 1917 Botha was a mason.¹⁴⁵

Freemasons cordially welcomed the arrival in 1921 in South Africa of Prince Arthur of Connaught, Past Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England, and son of the then Grand Master (1901 - 1929) and congratulated him on assumption of the office of Governor-General of the Union.¹⁴⁶ English lodges in the Central Division, formed in 1896, were without a District Grand Master from 1920 when A.J. Green, the previous District Grand Master, had died. Efforts were then made to persuade Connaught on his arrival to accept this position. He declined, pointing out it was inadvisable to accept. Three nominations were later submitted by lodges to London to fill the vacancy - T.A. King, J. van Praagh and Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, the financier, who later said he was not available. Later King withdrew and Praagh was appointed District Grand Master on 9 October, 1922.¹⁴⁷ Sir Ernest was master of Richard Giddy Lodge, Kimberley in 1912. In 1943 he

143. S.A. Masonic Journal, September, 1919, p. 24.

144. PMC 14/1/3, Phoenix Lodge, Minute Book, 13 January, 1919 - 1 March, 1923: Meeting, 28 September, 1919.

145. PMC Authors' Lodge Transactions: II, 1917, p. 15 (O.H. Bate: Dutch Freemasons in South Africa).

146. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 3 October, 1921, p. 51; A.S. Frere (ed): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p. 171 (J.W. Stubbs: Last 50 Years).

147. R.C. Dowie: District Grand Lodge Central Division 1876 - 1976, p. 6.

proposed his son, then Captain Harry Oppenheimer, for membership and in the same year Harry was initiated.¹⁴⁸

On Connaught's relinquishing his post in 1923, he wrote to the Transvaal District Grand Lodge that "he felt that the reticence which he had observed in masonic matters during his stay in South Africa should be maintained", again declining an invitation to attend meetings.¹⁴⁹

English Freemasons congratulated Edward, Prince of Wales, on being invested Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England before 9000 masons assembled in the Albert Hall, London on 25 October, 1922.¹⁵⁰ He had been initiated into Freemasonry in June, 1919 soon followed by his brother, the Duke of York.¹⁵¹ Those in South Africa were eager to welcome the Prince of Wales on his arrival in this country on his Africa tour in 1925, but, through the English Grand Secretary, he expressed a wish not to attend masonic meetings nor receive masonic addresses while in South Africa.¹⁵²

A special meeting of the English District Grand Lodge of the Western Division with delegations from the Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic constitutions, was held in Cape Town on 5 February, 1934 to give a masonic welcome to Prince George as Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England.¹⁵³ Amid the effusive expressions of loyalty, C.C. Silberbauer,

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148. KEA Richard Giddy Lodge, Minute Book, 5 October, 1911 - 1 March, 1917: Meeting, 2 October, 1912; Ibid., Minute Book, 19 October, 1927 - 5 September, 1946: Meeting, 2 September, 1943.
149. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 20 October, 1923, p.10.
150. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 17 March, 1923, p. 23.
151. A.S. Frere (ed.): Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p. 169 (J.W. Stubbs: Last 50 Years).
152. DGL ED EC Reports: Meeting, 10 September, 1924, Grand Secretary - DG Secretary, 16 January, 1924, p. 29.
153. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 5 February, 1934, pp. 3 - 12

Deputy Grand Master of Netherlandic Constitution, said: "There will be found many of Dutch and Huguenot descent holding under the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland while Netherlandic Freemasonry prides itself on the membership of Brethren of English, Irish and Scottish birth".¹⁵⁴ In reply, Prince George said: "It is indeed encouraging to know that, since 1795, the English and Dutch masons have maintained fraternal relations notwithstanding times of trouble and that lodges under both constitutions contain members of both nationalities who appreciate the bond of union which Freemasonry affords irrespective of race, religion or politics".¹⁵⁵

All South African constitutions joined to mourn the death of George V on 20 January, 1936.¹⁵⁶ In the same year the former Prince of Wales, King Edward VIII succeeded to the throne and was appointed Past Grand Master of English Freemasonry and Patron of the Order.¹⁵⁷ The next year South African masons congratulated King George VI on his coronation.¹⁵⁸ At a special Grand Lodge meeting in London, also in 1937, King George, as Past Grand Master and Patron of the Order, installed the Duke of Kent, his brother, as Grand Master of English Freemasonry.¹⁵⁹

Grand Lodges in Britain during these years adopted a policy of sending deputations of senior officers to the Dominions and dependencies, presumably not only to strengthen masonic links but to ensure the trend in the past 60 years in

154. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 5 February, 1934, p.10.

155. Ibid., p. 11.

156. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1936, p. 21.

157. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1937, p. 40.

158. Ibid., pp. 11 - 12.

159. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 19 September, 1937, pp. 357 - 397.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand to set up local Grand Lodges would not spread. Natal English District Grand Master, J.P. Sanders, suggested in 1923 to London that a deputation should visit the Union.¹⁶⁰ Grand Lodge officers toured Canada, Newfoundland, the United States of America, Palestine and Egypt in 1924.¹⁶¹ Eventually, in 1926, the English Grand Secretary, Sir Colville Smith, and other officers arrived in Cape Town for a tour of the Union. "An official visit such as the one we have just had cannot fail to have the effect of stimulating all the Brethren in this huge continent to further and lasting progress". Transvaal English District Grand Master, G.S. Burt Andrews, said after the tour.¹⁶²

Past Grand Master of the Scottish Constitution, Brigadier-General Sir Robert Gilmour, with other Grand Lodge officers toured local Scottish lodges in February, 1929.¹⁶³

The Grand Master of the Netherlandic Constitution, Lt. Col. H. van Tongeren, later to die in a Nazi concentration camp, visited South African lodges in February, 1932.¹⁶⁴

In 1935, the masonic members of the Imperial Press Conference were entertained by the four constitutions in South Africa - the English, Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic - on their visit to Cape Town. Head of the masonic delegation was F. Burd, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of British Colombia.¹⁶⁵

160. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 1 October, 1923, p.53.

161. Ibid., Meeting, 27 September, 1924, p. 64.

162. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 30 October, 1926, p.9.

163. NEA DGL Natal, EC Reports: Meeting, 29 September, 1929, p. 54.

164. TEA DGL TVL EC Reports: Meeting, 30 April, 1932, p. 25.

165. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1935, p. 12.

CHAPTER X

WAR YEARS 1939 - 1945

South Africa entered the second World War on 6 September, 1939 as a politically divided country. The question of South Africa's participation in the war had split the Hertzog-Smuts coalition, Hertzog claiming the war was between European powers which did not affect South Africa. He was in favour of remaining neutral. Smuts maintained it was best for South Africa to ally itself with Britain. The Cabinet was divided and the issue went to the House of Assembly which decided by 80 votes for war and 67 against. Hertzog resigned and the Governor-General, Sir Patrick Duncan, asked Smuts to form a cabinet.¹

Smuts faced the formidable task of mobilising his country for war, knowing that many citizens objected to taking part. In 1939 South Africa's armed forces consisted of an army of 17,038 men of whom 3,548 were in the permanent force, 1,837 in the air force and 432 in the navy. Smuts set to mobilisation successfully. During the seven years of war, 132,194 served in the army, 44,569 in the air force, 9,455 in the navy, while 24,974 women and 123,131 non-whites also enlisted. South African soldiers fought bravely and distinguished themselves in campaigns in East Africa, North Africa, Madagascar and Italy, with the first soldiers leaving the Union for East Africa in July, 1940.²

South Africa's active participation in the war accentuated the deep political divisions in the country - between those who supported the war and those who did not. This erupted into violence on several occasions - between soldiers and

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1. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 413 - 416 (B.J. Liebenberg: From the Statute of Westminster to the Republic of South Africa, 1931 - 1961).
 2. Ibid., p. 417.

members of the Ossewa Brandwag, the latter organisation originally formed to protect the Afrikaner culture in the late 1930s but which developed as a semi-military group. Acts of sabotage were committed by the extreme element of the Ossewa Brandwag - the Stormjaers.³

Hopes of a unified Afrikaner party opposing the war effort faded with differences between Hertzog and D.F. Malan while extremist elements emerged as a result. A former cabinet minister, Oswald Pirow, formed the Nuwe Orde which attracted admirers of German National Socialism, while Dr. Hans van Rensburg, Commandant General of the Ossewa Brandwag, preached a political philosophy on similar lines.⁴

Almost at the start of the war Freemasons came under political criticism by being named indirectly in a rumour created by extreme Afrikaner nationalists in 1940. Members of Malan's National Party felt that Hertzog, as chairman of the Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty, a new party aimed to unify Afrikanerdom, would be too moderate and tried to undermine his leadership.⁵ Some organised a conference in Bloemfontein to consider ways of establishing a republic, a course condemned by Hertzog. At the same time a rumour was spread in Bloemfontein that two letters written by Hertzog and N.C. Havenga had been found in a Freemason's suitcase. In these letters, both allegedly said they were willing, if Britain lost the war, to support Smuts if he declared a British-orientated republic in South Africa.⁶

3. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 419 - 421 (B.J. Liebenberg: From the Statute of Westminster to the Republic of South Africa 1931-1961).

4. Ibid., pp. 421. - 422.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

General Hertzog, speaking at Smithfield, said the "allegation was an infamous lie" disseminated by members of the Ossewa Brandwag.⁷ However the Rev. C.R. Kotzé, a prominent member of the Ossewa Brandwag, denied that this organisation was in any way connected with the rumour.⁸

The masonic leaders did not comment on this unusual rumour and must have been puzzled by it, not understanding how political leaders such as Hertzog and Havenga would write on important matters to an unidentified Freemason who would leave the letters in his suitcase in Bloemfontein, presumably at a masonic lodge there.

The masonic heads wisely felt that, because of the disturbed political situation in South Africa in the early days of the war, masons should be reminded of their injunction not to discuss political matters in lodges. "In view of the extreme political feeling which disturbs public harmony in South Africa at the present time, the District Grand Master desires to emphasise the necessity of preventing the intrusion of such feeling into the lodges in the district by carefully guarding against any tendency to permit matters arising out of political action in South Africa or abroad to be discussed within the precincts of your lodge", the Western Division District Grand Secretary, G.T. Phillips, warned his members.⁹ His advice apparently was partly ignored and led to divided opinion among masons about the rights or wrongs of the war in its early days, evidence of which was given by the following letter from a mason, Ben Steyn, Master of Golden Hope Lodge at Heilbron, to the S.A. Masonic Journal in 1940.¹⁰

7. The Cape Argus, 8 November, 1940, "Infamous Lie".

8. Ibid., 13 November, 1940, "Rev.C.R.Kotzé Explains".

9. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence: DGL Circular No. 13, February, 1940.

10. S.A. Masonic Journal, May, 1940, p. 3.

"I feel duty bound to give vent to my feelings through the medium of your esteemed Journal on a topic often discussed in our lodges lately and which is becoming the cause of unrest in the minds of many a brother as tending to disturb the harmony of the fraternity.

"It is fast becoming a practice in many lodges to welcome officially in open lodge soldier brethren on Active Service, even in their own lodges where they are sometimes termed 'semi-visitors'. This in itself would not be objectionable if done judiciously, but this practice is lately being carried further step by step and brethren now even go so far as to canvass openly in their toasts, or replies to toasts, for volunteers to join the Army.¹¹

"It is most disturbing to hear, for example, that the soldier brethren are fighting for us who have not joined up. They appear to lose sight of the fact that the soldier joined at his own free will and desire, while the brother who stays at home does so by exactly the same will.

"I sincerely trust that you will give prominence to this call on behalf of those who do not agree with the war policy - and I am confident that I am expressing the sentiments of a strong group of brethren - to the defaulters to consider us and respect our feelings as we respect theirs. We are taught in our very first lesson not to discuss matters of a political nature.

"I write this letter with the sincere desire to do my share in preventing serious repercussions in our lodges, and hope that the rulers of the Craft will re-act hereon in an endeavour to preserve the harmony which is so essential, particularly in the times we live in.

"Masonry is being attacked from outside and, if we allow internal disturbances, how can we expect to survive the crisis?", he added.¹²

11. S.A.Masonic Journal, May, 1940, p.3.

12. Ibid., p. 4.

Political involvement meant masonic dismissal. In Lady Grey, Lodge Unitas of the English Constitution had to surrender its charter because certain of its members were involved in the Grey Shirt (neo-nazi) movement of the 1930s, records S. Stretton of Wodehouse Lodge, Dordrecht.¹³

Because of the tense political atmosphere Freemasons were abnormally sensitive. A new lodge under the Dutch constitution, Ossewa, working in Afrikaans and meeting in Johannesburg, was opened in 1940. Members of the English Transvaal Board of General Purposes asked at their July meeting whether there was any connection between the lodge and the Ossewa Brandwag. It was suggested there was a connection between the secretarial address given on the invitation to attend the opening and that of the political organisation, Ossewa Brandwag. No one could comment and the "matter was dropped".¹⁴

Some years later the Ossewa Brandwag was unnamed but pointed at by the District Grand Master of the English Central Division, J. van Praagh, in his annual address to his lodge in 1945. "The activities of a certain secret political organisation which aims at establishing a republic in this country and which has adopted a ritual largely imitative of that of Freemasonry was fully discussed and condemned (at the conference of District Grand Masters in South Africa held in Bloemfontein on 16 and 17 October, 1944). But, as this organisation was being closely watched by the Government, it was decided not to take any further action at present".¹⁵

IN EUROPE

During the crucial months of 1939 and 1940 South African masons watched their brethren in Europe being killed or

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13. S. Stretton: Letter to writer, 30 August, 1978.
 14. TEA DGL TVL Reports: Meeting, 2 July, 1940, p. 20.
 15. KEA DGL CD EC Reports: Meeting, 19 May, 1945, p. 22.

imprisoned or oppressed under the Nazi onslaught while, at home, they faced severe criticism from without and questioning among members in their lodges about the war issue.

"In the days of unparalleled stress and anxiety the necessity undoubtedly exists for a clarion call to those whose faith in the attainment of masonic ideals may be somewhat shaken by the tragic episodes of the past and their despondent outlook on the future", wrote editor William Moister in the South African Masonic Journal.¹⁶

"The Netherlandic Deputy Grand Master for South Africa (C.C. Christian Silberbauer) has timeously stepped into the breach in an endeavour to recall waverers and to fortify them as well as staunch adherents of masonry, with renewed Faith and Courage", he added.¹⁷ Silberbauer, addressing the Lodge Muizenberg in January 1939, urged masons to consider the thoughts of the Moral Rearmament Movement.¹⁸ Founded by Dr. Frank Buchman and known in South Africa since 1929 when he visited the Union, the movement was defined by Buchman as "absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love in personal as well as public life. It has a dual purpose ... to affirm the rule of God as a directive for nations and then to reinforce the moral strength of a nation thus creating a healthy national life".¹⁹ Silberbauer compared these objectives to the principles of Freemasonry, and asked masons to apply them in their lives.²⁰

But there was discouragement among masons despite his call. "If the insistent demand for just dealing in respect of

16. S.A. Masonic Journal, February, 1939, p. 4.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. SESA 7, pp. 535 - 536. (B.B. Keeting: Moral Rearmament).

20. S.A. Masonic Journal, February, 1939, p. 6.

the rights of others and the ideals of brotherhood laid down in our Golden Rule were brought universally into vogue, this cruel war would never have eventuated", head of the Natal Irish lodges, W. Owen Roberts lamented to his Provincial Grand Lodge.²¹

"It is contrary to the fundamentals of Freemasonry to recognise the rule of lawless force taking the place of the rule of law; to allow tyranny (in Europe) to subjugate tolerance", said English District Grand Master, T.N. Cranstoun-Day to his Western Division members in April, 1940.²²

A month later, while at Clanwilliam installing the new master of the English lodge there, Cranstoun-Day and his District Grand Lodge heard the news that "in the grey hours of dawn of that fateful day in May 1940 the Germans entered on the unprovoked and barbarous invasion of Holland which has resulted in the elimination of Netherlandic Freemasonry in the Mother Country, the confiscation of its property, the theft of its funds estimated at some £200,000 which provided for and so greatly assisted the widows and orphans ... we learnt with poignant regret that the Grand Master (Major-General Van Tongeren) had died in a concentration camp at Sachsenhausen in Germany on 22 April and that the Deputy Grand Master was also a prisoner ... (Tongeren) died simply because he was a Freemason like the aged Grand Master of Austria who also died of brutal treatment in a German prison camp", he reported.²³

"In Norway, Sweden, Denmark, France, Holland, Poland and Czechoslovakia, Freemasonry was a living force. Today it has been razed to the ground by the hand of the oppressor.

21. NIA PGL Natal IC, Minute Book, 1 July, 1932 - 7 December, 1957: Meeting, 18 June, 1940, p. 3.

22. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1940, p. 22.

23. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1941, pp. 16 - 17.

At present, at least in the Western portion of Europe and the world, the only stronghold of Freemasonry holding out are Great Britain, Ireland and America", the Scottish District Grand Master, R.S. Cheetham, told members in 1940.²⁴

"In ten democracies Freemasonry has ruthlessly been suppressed and swept away by the merciless men who control the armed forces with whom our own country is in conflict", said Cranstoun-Day in 1942.²⁵ "At the present moment we are facing a supreme struggle to determine if the principles which are the foundation of our Craft shall remain or perish. The universality of Freemasonry is being challenged by destructive forces in so many countries formerly peaceful, happy and prosperous and, even in our own land, there has been evidence of the same insidious and evil influences at work", he added.²⁶

ALIEN MASONS

As the first refugees reached South Africa the thorny question of alien masons again emerged. The English Grand Lodge ruled in 1940: "Brethren of enemy nationality shall, during the continuance of the war and until Grand Lodge shall otherwise determine, abstain from attending any meeting of Grand Lodge or of a private lodge or any other masonic meeting". A master of a lodge may request "any brother of enemy birth" not to attend lodge if he might create discord.²⁷

J. Russell McLaren, President of the Board of General Purposes, told the English Grand Lodge at that meeting

24. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 28 October, 1940, pp. 12 - 13.

25. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1942, p. 17.

26. Ibid., pp. 17 - 18.

27. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 6 March, 1940, p. 9.

that Britain and her allies were at war with the whole of the German people, not just her rulers. "The whole of the German nation is working at high pressure by land, sea and air in every factory and dockyard with one object, and that object is our destruction".²⁸

He was proposing "that no brother being a national of any state with which Great Britain is at war shall attend or be admitted to any masonic meeting held under the English Constitution".²⁹ This revised resolution had been expunged of any reference to brethren of "enemy birth" and it would cease to exist at the end of the war.³⁰

He found considerable opposition at the meeting. Speakers were confused about the relationship between the masonic injunction that "allegiance to the sovereign of a mason's native land is the chief outstanding characteristic of every true Freemason" and his resolution.³¹

There was a possible conflict between allegiance to one's sovereign and the masonic ideal of universal brotherhood, speakers said.³² Did the resolution apply to Austrian, Polish and Czech refugees who had no liking for the Nazi regime in their own countries? asked A.L. Collins.³³ McLaren pointed out that enemy refugees who had been fortunate to find asylum in Britain should abstain from masonic activities while there.³⁴ He was quicker to point out that "you cannot allow it to go out to the world that Freemasonry owes an allegiance to this ideal (of brotherly love) which transcends, which overrides, allegiance to

28. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 6 March, 1940, p. 9.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., pp. 4 - 5.

31. Ibid., p. 11.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., p. 12.

34. Ibid., p. 13.

our King and Country".³⁵ His resolution was eventually carried overwhelmingly.³⁶

"This (Grand Lodge) resolution of course applies only to brethren who are actually enemy subjects owing allegiance to the rulers of their respective countries and does not at present apply to Brethren of enemy birth who had become Union nationals by naturalisation or who are British subjects", the head of English lodges in the Western Province, District Grand Master, T.N. Cranstoun-Day said, underlining the Grand Lodge decision.³⁷ However, German, Austrian and Czech refugees now in South Africa who belonged to lodges in their home countries would not come under the ban.³⁸

BENEVOLENCE

From the beginning of the war masonic divisions set up war funds to assist members or their families and to contribute to general relief funds. Outlining ways in which South African Freemasons could help, A.W. Dain, President of the English Western Division Board of General Purposes, in a circular wrote: "We British subjects in the Dominions are not being rationed. We have every comfort that we had in the days of peace. We do not live under a cloud of anxiety nor of constant fear for the safety of ourselves. We have so much to be thankful for that the very least we can do is to give to the limit of our capacity".³⁹ He suggested that, to assist Freemasons serving in the forces and their dependants, members should

35. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 6 March, 1940, p. 13.

36. Ibid.

37. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1940, p. 20.

38. Ibid., p. 21.

39. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: DGL Circular No. 14, August, 1940.

contribute towards relief for war-injured and disabled brethren, for widows and orphans, assisting the Royal Masonic Hospital and contributing to the Governor-General's Fund.⁴⁰

Masons of all constitutions in the coastal areas decided to assist the war effort practically by forming masonic Fellowships. In July 1940 the Western Province Masonic Fellowship was set up with the object of entertaining brethren in the services passing through Cape Town. To this end a fund was raised. Less than two years later - on 20 May, 1942, the Fellowship reported its members had entertained in lodges and members' homes some 1010 brethren in the Navy, Army and Air Forces and Merchant Service.⁴¹ A new phase of activity came in 1941, it reported, of helping brethren of the Merchant Service who had, through enemy action, lost their ships and all their belongings. Spare clothing was donated and the committee had by May 1942 "fitted up" 22 members of the Merchant Navy.⁴²

As the Japanese advance in the Far East continued, refugees from Singapore and the East came to Cape Town or passed through the city. Here the Fellowship helped the needy. Its chairman, W. James reported: "We are assisting the wife of a brother who was killed in Singapore. She arrived in Cape Town with her blind mother and her two children aged 10 and 3 years with nothing but what they stood up in. We found they were living in one of the city's mean streets", and the committee arranged for her to move to a house in

40. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942:
DGL Circular No. 14, August, 1940.

41. PMC 2/1/8 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1942 - 1944:
Masonic Fellowship report, 20 May, 1942, p. 1.

42. Ibid.

the suburbs.⁴³ In another instance, the committee helped "two women who left Singapore two days before the Japs took possession. They were penniless and had nothing but what they stood up in". The wife of one of the committee members at her own expense fitted them out for a total of £20.⁴⁴

In that year - 1942 - the United Grand Lodge of England, hearing of the Fellowship's work, sent it £200.⁴⁵

An officer - a Scottish Freemason - who had been on a ship sunk by enemy action had lost all his belongings. The committee rigged him out afresh.⁴⁶

The Fellowship could boast by mid-1943 it had entertained 1798 brethren in the armed services and, with the entry of America into the war, in December 1941 "a large number of our American brethren" had also been entertained, said James.⁴⁷ Because of more ships being sunk off South Africa's shores, more distressed sailor-masons were supplied with clothing and necessities in 1942.

Members of allied air forces were in the majority of servicemen passing through Cape Town in 1944 and 1945, James reported.⁴⁸ Sixty brethren, mainly from the United States and Britain, were entertained during 1945 and, in all, during the war more than 3000 Freemasons.⁵⁰ A balance of £228 was sent by the Fellowship to the Masonic Education Fund on its winding-up.⁵¹

43. PMC 2/1/8 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1942 - 1944: Masonic Fellowship report, 20 May, 1942, p. 1.

44. Ibid., pp. 1 - 2.

45. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: UGLE - DGM, 22 August, 1942.

46. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 27 October, 1941, p. 10.

47. PMC 2/1/8 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1942 - 1944: Fellowship Report, 21 June, 1943, p. 1.

48. Ibid., Fellowship Report, 20 August, 1945, p. 1.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., Fellowship Report, 14 September, 1946, pp. 1 - 2.

51. Ibid., p.2. (Bound together)

Masons in Natal combined to form a similar Fellowship Committee which also entertained several thousand servicemen passing through Durban.⁵²

In the first few weeks of the English District Grand Lodge of the Transvaal War Fund's existence, £500 was sent overseas to London and a further £6000 by October, 1941, with another £500 to reach England before Christmas. In addition the Mobile Church for North Africa, St. John in the Wilderness, received £350, while 100 guineas were sent to the Netherlands Grand East's relief fund.⁵³

Transvaal also contributed 300 guineas from its War Relief Fund to the District Grand Master in Singapore for the relief of masons there and in Hong Kong and Northern China.⁵⁴ It also set aside its Vogelfontein hostel for use by refugee children.⁵⁵ From its War Fund it withdrew £250 to provide food parcels to masons in Britain in the postwar days of food shortages.⁵⁶ The English Western Division set up a War Fund in July 1940 and, by the end of the year, £770 had been donated by lodges.⁵⁷ By April 1942 the fund stood at £1205.⁵⁸ At the end of 1949 the balance of £1700 was given towards the building of new headquarters as a Peace Memorial and to the Pension Fund.⁵⁹

In Cape Town, masons of all constitutions organised a golf tournament in 1941 which raised £865 for the Merchant Navy Fund.⁶⁰ More than £133,000 had been contributed from

52. M.J. Alexander: Our Golden Jubilee (DGL Natal SC) 1897 - 1947, p. 89.

53. S.A. Masonic Journal, December, 1941, p. 1.

54. Ibid., January, 1942, p. 5.

55. TEA DGL Transvaal EC Board of General Purposes Minutes 2 March, 1937 - 4 September, 1945: Meeting, 6 August, 1940.

56. Ibid., Board of General Purposes Minutes 2 October, 1945 - 2 September, 1952: Meeting, 1 June, 1948.

57. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1941, p. 30.

58. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1942, p. 28.

59. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1949, p. 20.

60. S.A. Masonic Journal, December 1941, p. 1.

South Africa by that time to aid disabled merchant seamen and their dependants.⁶¹

Dutch Freemasons rallied to the help of their colleagues in occupied Netherlands, contributing £1200 by October 1942. Of this £1100 was remitted to the Red Cross and St. John War organisations.⁶² But, because of the Nazi oppression of Freemasonry, these bodies warned that "the interests of masonic friends was best consulted by excluding them from the sphere of enquiry or attracting notice to their direct or indirect connection with masonry". The funds would be distributed when Holland was free.⁶³ Irish masons in Natal agreed to contribute £25 for the relief of distressed masons in Ireland suffering from enemy air raids in 1940.⁶⁴

The United Grand Lodge of England appealed to English Freemasons in South Africa to donate their masonic jewels (which are usually presented to individuals for service) to be melted down and given to the British Treasury to contribute to the war effort.⁶⁵ Local masonic heads of constitutions gave their verbal support. By 1941, the value of metals from surrendered jewels in Britain exceeded £20,000, the head of the English Central Division, J. van Praagh said in Kimberley, urging members to hand over voluntarily their masonic jewels.⁶⁶ No record can be found, however, of the extent of the appeal in South Africa.

61. S.A. Masonic Journal, December, 1941, p. 5.

62. PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 13 October, 1942, p. 15.

63. Ibid.

64. NIA PGL Natal IC Minute Book 1 July, 1932 - 7 December, 1957: Meeting, 11 December, 1941.

65. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: London - DGM, 29 August, 1940.

66. KEA DGL CD EC Reports: Meeting, 16 April, 1941, p. 26.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Lodges began to feel the loss of members from 1941 through enlistment in the forces and resignations. Figures of membership in the English lodges, carefully detailed in every District's annual report, reveal that the Western Division's strength fell from 1973 in 1939 to 1900 in 1941; that of the Eastern Division from 1513 to 1422; that of Natal from 1826 to 1818 and the Central Division from 701 to 466.⁶⁷ Surprisingly, Transvaal membership went up from 2501 in 1939 to 3048 in 1941.⁶⁸ Yet its District Board of General Purposes, reporting on the position of lodges in war time, had written in 1940: "When one or two members went on active service it seemed sufficient in some cases to justify raising the question of a lodge going into recess instead of being an incentive to other members to do more. A spirit of apathy seemed to set in. Yet most of our lodges are not in recess".⁶⁹

Its Dutch colleague, the Transvaal Provincial Grand Lodge, however, suffered a severe drop in membership from 701 in 1939 to 466 in 1941.⁷⁰

With many members away, lodges felt the financial pinch as, from the outset, most of them had told those enlisting that their subscriptions would be waived.⁷¹ However, English lodges were told by London subscriptions of members serving in the forces could be reduced but not suspended entirely

67. PMC DGL EC Returns: 1939, 1941.

68. TEA DGL Transvaal EC Returns: 1939, 1941.

69. Ibid., Board of General Purposes Minutes 2 March, 1937 - 4 September, 1945: Report, 2 July, 1940.

70. PMC PGL Transvaal NC Returns: 1939, 1941.

71. PMC 3/1/18 British Lodge Minute Book, 17 August, 1938 - 18 March, 1944: Meeting, 15 November, 1939.

unless the member were suffering financially while in the services".⁷²

In the first two years of war, the numerical strength of the English Western Division fell by 73.⁷³ This, pointed out its District Grand Master, T.N. Cranstoun-Day, "naturally has a repercussion on our District finances for whereas, during 1914 - 1918 and during the years immediately following, we were able to build up our funds, we shall now undoubtedly be faced with a depletion of our resources. This is, of course, due to the fact that, in the present hostilities, the manpower of the country is employed to a much greater extent than ever before, not only in the field but in war work of a nature not previously undertaken in our history".⁷⁴

Several South African Freemasons rose to high position in the Defence Force. Among them was General Dan Pienaar, initiated in the Rising Star Lodge, Bloemfontein on 1 October, 1935, who led the 1st South African Division at El Alamein.⁷⁵ He died in an air crash on 19 December, 1942.⁷⁶

Phoenix Lodge, Simon's Town mourned the death by drowning of Robert Spike who went down in the British warship *Courageous*.⁷⁷ A venue for many visiting seamen in peace and war time, Phoenix Lodge had many calls on its benevolent funds, perhaps none so strange as the provision

72. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 4 March, 1942, p. 106.

73. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1942. p. 14.

74. Ibid.

75. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years (of Rising Star Bloemfontein), p. 77.

76. Ibid.

77. PMC 14/1/6 Phoenix Lodge Minute Book, 9 March, 1936 - 11 February, 1939: Meeting, 13 November, 1939.

of two artificial legs for a war-wounded member, J. Giles. Another member took Giles to Durban for a fitting.⁷⁸ While Admiral Sir Robert Lindsay Burnett was with his ship in Simon's Town, he attended this lodge. He was a past master of Phoenix Lodge in England.⁷⁹ At a meeting on 22 January, 1945, he took the chair of the lodge to initiate his coxswain, G. Kells.⁸⁰

By July, 1940, 69 members of Scottish lodges in the Western Province were on active service.⁸¹ At Bloemfontein, the Rising Star Lodge had seen 29 members go on active service with 13 on part-time service on the home front, "a truly remarkable record".⁸² Servicemen stationed at Bloemfontein attended the lodge regularly and made up the numbers.⁸³

Several lodges sent parcels of food, cigarettes, clothing, magazines and letters to members serving overseas. British Lodge posted parcels and magazines and a monthly letter to members.⁸⁴ By September, 1940, this lodge had 11 on active service.⁸⁵ It heard with regret the death on active service in North Africa of a member, Lt. Jack Rudd, the first British Lodge member to enlist.⁸⁶

At a meeting on 16 February, 1944, of British Lodge, two key members were absent, the lodge being told that they were "on their way to the north where they had been ordered with other members of the forces". However, visiting brethren in the forces from overseas helped in

78. PMC 14/1/6 Phoenix Lodge Minute Book, 8 June, 1942 - 16 August, 1947: Meeting, 11 September, 1944.

79. Ibid., Meeting, 9 October, 1944.

80. Ibid., Meeting, 22 January, 1945.

81. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 29 July, 1940, p. 7.

82. L.H. Wienand: First 81 Years, p. 77.

83. Ibid.

84. PMC 3/1/18 British Lodge Minute Book, 17 August, 1938 - 18 March, 1942: Meeting, 20 November, 1940.

85. Ibid., Meeting, 18 September, 1940.

86. Ibid., Meeting, 19 March, 1941.

in the ceremony.⁸⁷

In 1939, with its membership at 95, the Scottish lodge Thistle at Durban saw 20 of its members volunteer for war service. By 1946 its service record numbered 40.⁸⁸

The Scottish District Grand Lodge in the Transvaal boasted in 1946 that, out of a membership of 2863, 233 were still on military service.⁸⁹ Its Eastern Province colleague, with a membership of 471, had 67 on active service in 1941.⁹⁰ The District Grand Master for the English Central Division J. van Praagh recorded in 1942 that, out of a total membership of less than 500, 120 were on active service.⁹¹

The Irish Provincial Grand Lodge in Natal, with 318 on its rolls, recorded 48 members on active service in 1942.⁹² Similar figures were produced by the Dutch Transvaal Provincial Grand Lodge which, in 1945, recorded 545 members with 39 on active service.⁹³

From 1944, lodge membership began to rise again. In the English Constitution, Western Division membership rose from 1900 in 1941 to 2174 in 1945 and 2265 in 1946; the Eastern Division from 1422 in 1941 to 1600 in 1945 and 1645 in 1946; Natal from 1818 in 1941 to 2255 in 1946; Transvaal from 3048 in 1941 to 3059 in 1945 and 3213 in 1946;

87. PMC 3/1/19 British Lodge Minute Book, 15 April, 1942 - 21 May, 1947: Meeting, 16 February, 1944.

88. S.A. Masonic Journal, July, 1946, p. 19.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

90. S.A. Masonic Journal, November, 1941, p. 5.

91. S.A. Masonic Journal, July, 1942, p. 22.

92. NIA PGL Natal IC Minute Book, 1 July, 1932 - 7 December, 1957: Meeting, 12 June, 1942.

93. PGL Transvaal NC Minute Book, 29 July, 1933 - 4 October, 1947: Meeting, 12 November, 1945.

the Central Division from 468 in 1941 to 497 in 1945 and 555 in 1946.⁹⁴ The Dutch Transvaal rolls rose from 466 in 1941 to 545 in 1945 and 614 in 1946.⁹⁵

"The decade starting in 1940, despite the dark clouds of World War II saw the revival of interest in the lodge and, by the 1950s, candidates were streaming in, almost half the present membership being of that vintage", writes S. Stretton of Wodehouse Lodge, Dordrecht.⁹⁶

As an end to hostilities was seen, enthusiasm for the Craft was renewed and new lodges were formed at the major centres. Australian masons resident in Natal in 1944 set up Lodge Ku-Ring-Ai in the Scottish Constitution in Durban.⁹⁷

Greek refugees helped to form the Orphic Lodge under the English Constitution in Johannesburg on 17 April, 1944.⁹⁸ A few days later the Nelspruit United Lodge was consecrated under the Scottish Constitution.⁹⁹

SAAF airmen at Brooklyn Air Tuition School at Agterplaas airfield wanted to start their own lodge in Cape Town in 1941. This, however, was opposed by the District Grand Master of the English Western Division, T.N. Cranstoun-Day, who suggested they join the United Service Lodge which was

94. PMC DG Lodges English Constitution Returns: 1941, 1945, 1946.

95. PGL Transvaal NC Returns: 1941, 1945, 1946.

96. S. Stretton: History Wodehouse Lodge 1874 - 1974, (Typed MSS), p. 2.

97. M.J. Alexander: Our Golden Jubilee (DGL Natal SC), p. 99; Ku-Ring-Ai is an Australian aboriginal word meaning "meeting place" or "a place where evening shadows fall" (Alexander, p. 99).

98. S.A. Masonic Journal, May, 1944, p. 7.

99. Ibid., pp. 7 - 8.

formed in 1908 by British soldiers stationed in Cape Town on permanent garrison after the second War of Independence.¹⁰⁰ United Service Lodge must have welcomed the influx of SAAF masons for, in 1939, the then remaining 10 members of the lodge had debated closing it down.¹⁰¹

CHURCH ATTACKS

In the same year - 1940 - in which the Nazi onslaught destroyed Freemasonry in Europe, an avowed enemy of Freemasonry in South Africa, Dr. G. Kikillus, became convenor of a Synodical Commission of the Cape Dutch Reformed Church with the task of determining whether Freemasons should take church office.¹⁰²

Its report caused a furore in masonic and non-masonic circles. Taking masonic and non-masonic written works as references, the commission set out to prove:

- (a) that Freemasonry had its origins in Jewish movements, The Knights Templars, Alchemists, Rosicrucians, Deists, Cabbalists and the operative masonic unions.¹⁰³
- (b) That "not only is Freemasonry a religion but it raises itself above the Christian Church which has to yield to it".¹⁰⁴ "He who is truly a member of the Church of Christ may not become a member of an organisation which stands against Christ and his Church".¹⁰⁵
- (c) Freemasonry was a secret society.¹⁰⁶
- (d) "Freemasonry is a religion next to and opposite to the Holy Bible. It shuns the light and seeks to rule the

100. J.W. Baker: United Services Lodge History (typed MSS).

101. Ibid.

102. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1940, pp. 335 - 342, Verslag van die kommissie oor Vrymesselary; PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Review of Report of Synodical Commission of DRC (Cape) on Freemasonry (Translation) 1942, p. 65.

103. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1940, p. 335.

104. Ibid., p. 336.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

world in secrecy through one organisation and brotherhood".¹⁰⁷

- (e) Freemasonry has a false idea of God.¹⁰⁸
- (f) It rejects the salvation by faith in the death and atonement of Christ.¹⁰⁹
- (g) The masonic ritual is borrowed from the heathen mysteries or from the "Jewish Talmudian views".¹¹⁰
- (h) It insists upon "improper oaths".¹¹¹
- (i) It shows "contempt for the commandments of God" even to allowing masons to 'have a concubine'.¹¹²
- (j) "Freemasonry aims at world citizenship and, in principle, it is opposed to every endeavour to stimulate love of the nation and patriotic pride ... It represents a certain danger to the state".¹¹³
- (k) "Freemasonry aims at a double object, namely a world republic and a world religion".¹¹⁴
- (l) Freemasonry totally excludes Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer.¹¹⁵
- (m) Freemasonry totally opposes all Christian missionary work.¹¹⁶

The Commission recommended to the Synod that "in future no Freemason will be allowed to fill any church office".¹¹⁷

107. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1940, p. 337.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid., p. 338.

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid.

112. Ibid., p. 339.

113. Ibid., pp. 339 - 340.

114. Ibid., p. 340.

115. Ibid.

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid., p. 341.

The Cape Press gave the Commission's report headlines. "Synod attacks Freemasons, Heathen Ritual and Improper Oaths", read The Cape Argus.¹¹⁸ "Extraordinary DRC allegations", read The Cape Times.¹¹⁹ Die Burger announced: "Kerk se houding teenoor Vrymesselary".¹²⁰

The Synod considered the report in November, 1940 and, on the motion of the Rev. P. du Toit of Cape Town, it agreed that it was "very desirable that no Freemason be in future elected or appointed to any church office".¹²¹

The masonic leaders, led by the District Grand Master of English lodges in the Western Province, T.N. Cranstoun-Day, broke their usual silence following the publication of the Commission's report. Cranstoun-Day described it as "imposing but otherwise a mass of misstatements, scandalous charges and utterly false accusations and conclusions".¹²²

It was a "farrago of nonsense ... while I believe with Grand Lodge that such attacks should be ignored as it is impossible to enter into any arguments with non-masons, yet this attack had a certain nuisance value in the distress it caused to those of our Brethren who held office in, or were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, and to their families".¹²³ In the circumstances the masonic leaders sent a joint protest in 1941 against the report to the Synod and to the Press.¹²⁴

118. The Cape Argus, 13 November, 1940: "Synod Attacks Freemasons".

119. The Cape Times, 14 November, 1940: "Freemasons Attacked".

120. Die Burger, 14 November, 1940: "Kerk se houding teenoor Kaapse Vrymesselary", p.3.

121. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1940, p.341.

122. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1941, p.17.

123. Ibid., p. 18.

124. Ibid.

T.N. Cranstoun-Day, C.J. Sibbert, Provincial Grand Master of the Southern Cape Irish lodges, R.S. Cheetham, District Grand Master for the Western Province Scottish lodges, and C.C. Silberbauer, Deputy Grand Master of Dutch lodges in South Africa, signed the protest to the Synod which read: "We, the undersigned, in our respective official capacities as representatives of the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland, the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and the Grand East of the Netherlands, hereby place on record and convey to the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, our most emphatic protest against the finding of the Synodical Commission regarding Freemasonry and its principles, as contained in the Commission's Report recently presented to the Synod".¹²⁵

Letters were sent to The Cape Times, The Cape Argus, Die Burger and Die Suiderstem, again from the four masonic leaders, protesting about the Commission's report and refuting its allegations.¹²⁶ They were all published.¹²⁷

The letter read:

"To anyone who has knowledge of Freemasonry; of its great beneficent works; of its educational and charitable institutions; and of the men who are to be found actively interested and engaged in its work, the Commission's conclusions are ludicrous in the extreme, and it is quite evident that this so-called 'investigation' has been made

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125. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: Masonic leaders - Scriba DRC, Cape Town, 30 November, 1940.
126. PMC 2/2/2 DGM WD EC Special File DRC Attacks: Letter to Press, 19 November, 1940.
127. Die Burger, 19 November, 1940: "N G Kerk en Die Vrymesselary"; The Cape Times, 19 November, 1940: "Masons Reply to DR Synod"; The Cape Argus, 19 November, 1940: "D R Church and Masons"; Die Suiderstem, 19 November, 1940: "Besluit van Synode I.S. Vrymesselary", p.9.

without seeking any information from any official masonic sources.¹²⁸

"In South Africa, Freemasonry has pursued the even tenor of its way since 1772 when it was introduced here from Holland, and amongst its members have been four Presidents of the Transvaal and Free State Republics, viz. Pretorius, Burgers, Reitz and Brand, and the late Lord de Villiers, who were all members of the Dutch Reformed Church. The Very Reverend Dean Barnett Clarke of Cape Town was an enthusiastic Freemason for 35 years until his death.¹²⁹

"There is no secret with regard to any of the basic principles of our Fraternity; our unalterable policy is to stand aside and aloof from every question affecting political parties or questions as to rival theories of Government; and no member, in his capacity as a Freemason, is permitted to discuss or to advance his views on theological or political questions.¹³⁰

"We have no secret governing authority, objective, or design. So much for the allegations of subversive, and anti-Church, anti-religious, or new religious, activities.¹³¹

"We must emphatically affirm that every one of the very grave allegations and charges made by the Commission against the Masonic Fraternity are not only scandalous, but absolutely false and untrue; while the reference to ritual observances, torn from their context, and the conclusions drawn therefrom are based upon incorrect premises, and a lack of knowledge of their esoteric

128. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Letter to Press, 19 November, 1940.

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid.

131. Ibid.

meanings and symbolism in the light of the Holy Scriptures.¹³²

"This is not the first time that the Synod has considered the same subject, but, on previous occasions, it has very wisely decided that it was not competent to form an opinion through lack of sufficient knowledge of Freemasonry.¹³³

"Having read the present report it is apparent that the members of the Commission have profited little from the reading of their very limited bibliography, and we can only express amazement that, after such a study (even if it was but prefatory), such a tissue of unjustifiable, ridiculous, and utterly false allegations, and distorted conclusions, should have been placed on record and submitted to the Synod as the considered opinion of its responsible commissioned advisers", the letter added.¹³⁴

However this Press statement was not enough. "We found that the interests of the Order demanded a very full and complete answer to the charges be made and given the widest publicity", Deputy Grand Master of the Netherlandic Constitution, C.C. Silberbauer said in Cape Town in 1942.¹³⁵ The four masonic leaders thus compiled a review of the Commission's report in both languages and circulated it to all lodges in South Africa and to the Press and other interested parties by early 1942.¹³⁶

The report explained that the lodges in South Africa warranted by Grand Lodges worked the three Craft degrees which were open to any religious denomination. The so-called higher degrees were Christian only.¹³⁷

132. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Letter to Press, 19 November, 1940.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid.

135. PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 13 October, 1942, pp. 13 - 14.

136. Ibid.

137. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Review of Report of Synodical Commission, p. 5.

It answered the allegations one by one in a lengthy booklet. The answers may be read in conjunction with the charges of the commission.

- (a) " Origin derived from operative masonry only;¹³⁸
- (b) " Its character is religious but not dogmatic;¹³⁹
- (c) " Its claim to secrecy is the right of secrecy which belongs to private family life and to private family devotions and affairs;¹⁴⁰
- (d) " Its idea of God admits of no ambiguity and is truly expressed in the Bible statement : "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth", and this statement in the Volume of the Sacred Law no Freemason would presume to question;¹⁴¹
- (e) " Its refusal to promulgate any doctrine of its own
- (f) upon which its members must depend for their eternal salvation leaves every member free to accept the doctrine and ministrations of the Church upon whose advice he relies;¹⁴²
- (g) " Its ritual, far from being "heathenish", is expressive of the most reverential belief in God's mercy and justice, to be worthy of which man must be true to the Divine teachings which Freemasonry considers may be assisted by symbolic illustration;¹⁴³
- (h) " Its "oaths", or as we prefer to call them, obligations and promises, are not improper, nor are they repugnant to the purest mind; they do not violate the conscience or restrict the freedom of any man be he Christian or not;¹⁴⁴
- (i) " Its respect for God's Commandments is not confined

138. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Review of Report of Synodical Commission, p. 9.

139. Ibid., p. 60.

140. Ibid.

141. Ibid., p. 61.

142. Ibid.

143. Ibid.

144. Ibid.

within the narrow limits of the Decalogue of Moses, but extends to all the Divine admonitions, and especially to the "Golden Rule". Its belief that practical evidence of obedience to those commands, and also to the teachings of Christ are more to be commended than "holding up" the Ten Commandments inside the Lodge and talking about them; and that they can be more vividly illustrated by our well-known symbols, the square and the compasses;¹⁴⁵

- (j) " Its constant and recognised loyalty to the State, and its firm conviction that a feeling of national pride, and its expression in patriotic endeavour, is essential to the ordered wellbeing of the State and its continued progress; its constant endeavour on every occasion to promote the prosperity of the Nation by inculcating the highest ideals of citizenship and of service to the state;¹⁴⁶
- (k) " Its aim to promote goodwill among men of all nationalities and creeds and thus induce them to live and work together in that friendship and trust which should prevail amongst the highest of God's created beings; its emphatic refusal to take part in any plots and conspiracies which would subvert the integrity or existence of the Nation, and its consequent abstention from politics in any shape or form;¹⁴⁷
- (l) " Its aim to expand and deepen that religious instinct which is inherent in every man, and thus facilitate the work of the Churches in bringing about the consummation of God's purposes; its firm and unalterable resolve not to come into conflict with, or in any way to usurp, the functions of any Church and thus obstruct the attainment of that fundamental

145. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Review of Report of Synodical Commission, p. 61.

146. Ibid.

147. Ibid.

unity which is the first essential for the fulfilment of the Divine plan.¹⁴⁸

- (m) " Its fixed policy not to proselytise on behalf of any Church or creed, or to interfere in the slightest way with Church work; and its sympathy with every endeavour to lighten the burdens of the distressed, the fatherless, and the sick, in which work it assists to the utmost of its power and resources".¹⁴⁹

However this review could not be considered until the next session of the Synod in 1945.¹⁵⁰ When the Cape Synod met in November, 1945, it reaffirmed its 1940 resolution disapproving of Freemasonry and "declaring it most desirable that Freemasons should not in future be elected or appointed to any office in the church".¹⁵¹

In this instance the Synod rejected the report of its commission led by Dr. S.F. Weich of Calitzdorp. It had recommended that "a scientific investigation into the nature of Freemasonry with special reference to questions arising in the Federated Churches in connection therewith" be conducted pending which the 1940 resolution be suspended.¹⁵²

The commission had issued a minority report signed by P.H. Coetzee, recommending that the 1940 resolution stand as the Freemasons' review of the Commission's report in 1942 "does not conclusively refute the report of 1940 on any cardinal point".¹⁵³

148. PMC 2/2/2 Special File DRC Attacks: Review of Report on Synodical Commission, p. 62.

149. Ibid.

150. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1945, p. 57; PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 13 October, 1942, p. 14.

151. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1945, p. 440; The Cape Times, 15 November, 1945: "DR Church and Freemasonry".

152. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1945, p. 435; PMC 2/2/2 DGM WD, Special File DRC Attacks: Dr. A.J. van der Merwe - Cranstoun-Day, 20 May, 1948.

153. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1945, p. 435; The Cape Times, 15 November, 1945: "DR Church and Freemasonry"; Die Suiderstem, 16 November, 1945, p.2.

"The Government, if not the Synodical Commission, appears quite satisfied that we have no subversive aims and are not a danger to the State", T.N. Cranstoun-Day, head of English lodges in the Western Province, told his District Grand Lodge after the church's attack in 1940.¹⁵⁴ He was referring to a Department of Defence proclamation No. 105 of 1940 in Government Gazette 2772 of 4 June, 1940 forbidding the wearing, use or possession of any article of dress, badge, medal, emblem or other distinctive mark denoting membership of any organisation not specifically exempted.¹⁵⁵ The Freemasons were not listed among the exempted organisations and Cranstoun-Day wrote to the then Minister of Defence, General J.C. Smuts, pointing out that, by implication, the Fraternity of Freemasons under the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, Scotland and the Netherlands "would appear to be regarded as subversive organisations".¹⁵⁶ In South Africa there were about 800 lodges and chapters with 20,000 members.¹⁵⁷ The proclamation would fall heavily on them for they possessed regalia, medals and emblems of the Order.¹⁵⁸

Smuts replied that the Freemasons' organisations were not considered by the Government to fall under the prohibition mentioned in the Proclamation and hence it was not considered necessary to grant special exemption from these restrictions to them.¹⁵⁹

It is difficult to gauge the effect of the Church opposition to the Craft. Cranstoun-Day in 1945 wrote: "The losses

154. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1941, p. 19.

155. Ibid.; Government Gazette No. 2772, 4 June, 1940, p.551.

156. Ibid., Appendix p. 43.

157. Ibid., p. 44.

158. Ibid.

159. Ibid., Appendix p. 45.

from the latest attack of Freemasons resigning were negligible".¹⁶⁰ However, C.C. Silberbauer, addressing Dutch members in 1942, said decreases in sources of revenue from lodges for the masonic province were due to the "war, hostility of the D.R. Church and the antagonism of certain political organisations".¹⁶¹

"Ever since the circulation of their 1940 report a whispering campaign has been conducted against us. Last month the initiation of a serving brother had to be abandoned because the candidate had been openly intimidated by Dutch parsons in Stellenbosch. Considerable pressure has also been brought to bear upon the womenfolk and in business affairs as well", Cranstoun-Day told his Grand Lodge in London, enclosing a copy of the 1942 Review.¹⁶²

LANGUAGE ISSUE

The issue of languages in a lodge taxed the minds of masonic leaders in the 1940s. The United Grand Lodge of England had decided in 1935 that the obligation of a candidate could be given in both English and Afrikaans if required, a clumsy compromise it transpired, as reported in Chapter VIII.

Head of the Western Province English District, T.N. Cranstoun-Day, stated that it was imperative "the two cultures should be kept separate in the English purity and in all our present lodges; and Afrikaans, either in unilingual lodges under the Netherlandic Constitution or perhaps a

160. PMC 2/2/2 DGM WD EC Special File DRC Attacks: Cranstoun-Day - S.A. Masonic Journal, 12 December, 1945.

161. PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 13 October, 1942. p. 15.

162. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: DGM - GL, 2 March, 1942.

bilingual Afrikaans lodge under our Constitution when the language has settled sufficiently to obtain a satisfactory translation".¹⁶³

Advisers to the English Grand Master had second thoughts in 1939. Recognising that both languages had equal rights in South Africa, they were considering revising their previous decision (given above) allowing Afrikaans to be used, on the local District Grand Master granting special permission.¹⁶⁴ Cranstoun-Day, an Anglophile, remained adamant. Lodges should continue to work in English to retain the English culture. Those who wished could go to an Afrikaans working in a Netherlandic lodge.¹⁶⁵ However, he told Grand Lodge that he had permitted the use of Afrikaans in special instances in ceremonies but, before the regular use of Afrikaans was allowed, the draft Afrikaans translation of the ritual must be approved by masonic translators and the authorities.¹⁶⁶ He admitted he did not speak Afrikaans. Requests for the use of Afrikaans had come from Stellenbosch and Robertson lodges.¹⁶⁷

With "six or eight" of their 54 lodges using Afrikaans, the Netherlandic Constitution was competing in the country towns in starting new Afrikaans-speaking lodges, he revealed.¹⁶⁸

London nevertheless invited views on the use of Afrikaans from all the English District Grand Masters in South Africa.¹⁶⁹

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- 163. PMC 2/1/6 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1936 - 1937: DGM - Perrott, 22 May, 1936.
 - 164. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1944: UGLE - DGL, 2 March, 1939.
 - 165. Ibid., Cranstoun-Day - UGLE, 23 March, 1939.
 - 166. Ibid.
 - 167. Ibid.
 - 168. Ibid.
 - 169. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942: J. van Praagh - UGLE, 21 March, 1939.

J. van Praagh, District Grand Master of the Central Division, found "no tendency to render our English ritual through the medium of any other tongue ... I am opposed to the principle of permitting any portion of our ritual to be rendered in Afrikaans".¹⁷⁰ "The introduction of Afrikaans would lead to confusion, mutilation of the beautiful phraseology of our ritual and ultimate disintegration of English lodges in my district".¹⁷¹ A Grand Lodge decision to allow the use of Afrikaans would "result in schism and ultimately in disruption and perhaps breaking away from the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England and setting up their own Grand Lodge in the Union of South Africa", he added.¹⁷²

W.H. Weekes, District Grand Master for the North-Eastern (Free State) Division, in 1939 faced strong pleas for the use of Afrikaans. "We should be making a mistake if we refused to consider requests for the use of the mother tongue", he told Cranstoun-Day.¹⁷³ He and his board felt attention should be given to these requests.¹⁷⁴

Eventually the advisers to the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England thanked all their correspondents over the language issue but felt they could not change their ban on the use of Afrikaans.¹⁷⁵

A conference of District Grand Masters of English lodges in South Africa met in Bloemfontein on 16 and 17 October, 1944, to discuss general matters. "It was unanimously agreed that

170. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942:
J. van Praagh - UGLE, 21 March, 1939.

171. Ibid.

172. Ibid.

173. PMC 2/1/7 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1938 - 1942:
Weekes - Cranstoun-Day, 24 March, 1939.

174. Ibid.

175. Ibid., UGL - Cranstoun-Day, 4 May, 1939.

any application for working in the Afrikaans language in all lodges in the English Constitution be refused", District Grand Master, J. van Praagh told his members in 1945.¹⁷⁶ He had earlier told one of his lodges, Octahedron at Barkly West, that, providing the majority of members agreed, there would be no objection to members giving their views in Afrikaans at lodge meetings if their knowledge of English were insufficient.¹⁷⁷ However, the general decision of 1944 overruled him.

In 1945 an English Constitution Free State lodge asked to work in Afrikaans and its District Grand Lodge decided other views should be sought.¹⁷⁸ The other English District Grand Lodges decided to reaffirm their 1944 decision and the Free State District Grand Lodge had to refuse the application.¹⁷⁹

Other constitutions were more flexible. By 1964, 25 out of 94 Scottish lodges in South Africa were working in Afrikaans.¹⁸⁰ The Irish Constitution permitted Afrikaans workings in the 1960s.¹⁸¹ English remains the medium today in English Constitution lodges.

UNITED GRAND LODGE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

The question of a United Grand Lodge for South Africa receded far into the masonic background as a result of the war.

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- 176. KEA DGL CD EC Reports: Meeting, 19 May, 1945, p. 23.
 - 177. KEA DGL CD EC Minute Book, 15 February, 1933 - 19 February, 1947: Meeting, 15 March, 1939.
 - 178. PMC 2/1/9 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1945 - 1946: DGL OFS - Cranstoun-Day, 11 September, 1945.
 - 179. Ibid., Cranstoun-Day - DGL OFS, 1 April, 1946.
 - 180. GL Scotland Grand Committee Reports: 1964, returns.
 - 181. NIA PGL Natal IC Minute Book, 16 January, 1956 - 5 March, 1971: Meeting, 21 January, 1963.

A conference of District Grand Masters of the English constitution, on the suggestion of the District Grand Master of the Free State District, J. Reid, met in Bloemfontein on 16 and 17 October, 1944, to discuss "many things of masonic importance to South Africa".¹⁸²

There was no fixed agenda. Colonel T.E. Robins, the District Grand Master of Rhodesia, "drew the attention of the meeting to start a Grand Lodge of South Africa embracing all constitutions and it was unanimously agreed that all English Constitutions would be opposed to such a venture".¹⁸³

Of more concern to the masonic authorities meeting at Bloemfontein was the "chaotic state of the Netherlandic Constitution owing to the fact that the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands had not functioned since the invasion of Holland", but no decision was arrived at.¹⁸⁴ The Dutch Grand Master, Major-General H. van Tongeren, imprisoned by the Nazis, died "a miserable death in a German concentration camp" reported the Dutch Transvaal District Grand Master, U.S.M. Vogts in 1941. "Our seat of Government has ceased to exist".¹⁸⁵

As the most senior Dutch mason in South Africa, the Deputy Grand Master, C.C. Silberbauer, then assumed the powers of the Supreme Government in the Netherlands and became, in effect,

182. PMC 2/1/8 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1942 - 1944: Reid - DGM, 27 January, 1944.

183. Ibid., Minutes of Bloemfontein Conference, 16 and 17 October, 1944. p. 3.

184. Ibid., DGM CD - UGLE, 24 October, 1944.

185. PGL Transvaal NC Reports: Meeting, 30 August, 1942, p. 159.

the senior Dutch mason in the world.¹⁸⁶ But Silberbauer died aged 81 in 1944, and Col. John Rose, a Provincial Grand Master, was installed as his successor on 25 April, 1944.¹⁸⁷

South African lodges were told by circular dated 14 August, 1945 that the Netherlands had been liberated and the Grand Lodge re-established under the Grand Master L.J.J. Caron and some order was re-established.¹⁸⁸ "Our Order stands firm and unbroken in South Africa", wrote the Transvaal Division's Board of General Purposes in 1946, reporting a membership strength of 702 in 15 active lodges.¹⁸⁹

As a result of the war the Grand Lodge movement was stilled for the moment.

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186. PGL (Transvaal excepted) NC Reports: Meeting, 10 September, 1940.
187. PMC 2/1/8 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1942 - 1944: Cranstoun-Day - UGLE, 27 July, 1944.
188. S.A. Masonic Journal, September, 1945, p. 21.
189. PGL Transvaal NC Reports: Meeting, 19 October, 1946, p. 228.

CHAPTER XI

PEACE, DISILLUSIONMENT AND NEW HOPES: 1945 - 1961

As world peace neared, Freemasons in South Africa began to look at - and hope for - a future with promise. "Our fighting men will come home. Let Freemasonry as well as the Government see that this time they return to something worthwhile, something worthy of their effort and sacrifice", said English masonic leader, T.N. Cranstoun-Day in April, 1944.¹ "The greatest indictment against Democracy has been in its failure in a great measure to provide occupation and employment for the young men who fought in the last war and for the later generation ... this time we have large numbers who will return with a much greater knowledge of the world, ardently hoping to play a useful part in the community".² Here masons through daily contacts could bring pressure to bear to ensure that returning servicemen be given employment.

"Freemasonry can be a power in world affairs; not in its corporate form but in the sum total of individual efforts and example", he added.³ "Masons should give a firm refusal to join in or to encourage any sectional obstruction to the world effort to secure a good peace".⁴

"We must guard against two fallacies - that with peace everything must be changed or that nothing must be changed", Cranstoun-Day told members welcoming the end of hostilities in 1946.⁵

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1. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 21 April, 1944, p. 15.
 2. Ibid., p. 16.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid., p. 17.
 5. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1946, p. 20.

Next year he was despairing. "Humanity has in recent years been passing, and is passing even now, a sickening experience. The foundations of society have been terribly shaken; all things are in a state of flux".⁶

"The peace for which we fought and prayed still eludes us; misunderstandings still prevail and the conflict of ideologies continues unabated", lamented H.W. Gibson, Scottish District Grand Master in the Western Province, in 1948.⁷ "Power politics still hold sway in a large portion of Europe to the absolute exclusion of freedom in any sense. Brotherly love and respect for human rights in such parts are conspicuous by their absence".⁸

But masonic leaders urged their members to remain steadfastly to the principles of Freemasonry and practise them in everyday life. "It is essential that we as Freemasons shall not be content merely to attend our ceremonies ... but we must determine to take with us into the disturbed and stricken world our masonic characteristics, Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth and actively practise them", A.F. Stephen, new Scottish District Grand Master of the Western Province, said at his installation ceremony in June, 1948.⁹

"It is evident that the spirit of greed and selfishness has taken possession of the human mind", said a disillusioned senior Dutch mason, A.L. Botha, addressing Aurora Lodge, Pretoria in August, 1946.¹⁰

"International differences, strikes, internal troubles where all nations are concerned, have led to lawlessness of

6. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1947, p. 24.

7. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 26 April, 1948, pp. 7 - 8.

8. Ibid.

9. DGL WP SC Reports: Meeting, 21 June, 1948. p. 10.

10. S.A. Masonic Journal, September, 1946, p. 30.

all descriptions unheard of previously; so much so indeed that every seriously-minded man, whether Freemason or not, must view the future with a measure of fear", he added.¹¹

FINANCE

In the immediate postwar years, as masons settled down to peaceful lives again and faced inflation, lodges' benevolent funds were first to feel the change. English lodges in the Western Province reduced their contributions in 1946 to the District Benevolent Fund from £609 to £219 with only 15 out of the 33 lodges on the roll subscribing. And yet relief grants paid out totalled £330.¹²

To build up funds lodge secretaries were urged in 1946 to contact returning masons and, where subscriptions had been reduced or waived for reasons of financial hardship, to see they once again became full subscribing members.¹³

Ten years later, the picture was the same. "The majority of lodges in this country are being compelled by circumstances beyond their control to face up to a problem which, with the passing of time, is assuming more serious proportions ... financial problems", wrote Editor E. Conradie in the S.A. Masonic Journal in July, 1956.¹⁴ Costs had risen but subscriptions and fees had risen only slightly. He urged lodges to budget more carefully.¹⁵

But money was still found in those postwar years for benevolence. The Transvaal Scottish lodges had by the end of 1954 subscribed £20,000 towards a home for aged Freemasons. Another £20,000

11. S.A. Masonic Journal, September, 1946, p. 30.

12. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1947, p. 14.

13. Ibid., Meeting, 29 April, 1946, p. 15.

14. S.A. Masonic Journal, July, 1956, p. 1.

15. Ibid.

was needed, the District Grand Master, W.E. Marsh, told members.¹⁶ The first two cottages and the main building of the scheme to be called Rosslyn Park, had been completed by the end of 1955.¹⁷

By 1955, the English Transvaal District had become the largest masonic district under the English Constitution in the world, apart from those in Britain. It contained 86 Craft lodges, more than 30 Chapters and other masonic bodies.¹⁸ This pressure forced the building of the Freemasons Hall at Clarendon Circle, Johannesburg, which seats 650.¹⁹ The ceremonial opening of the hall coincided with the Diamond Jubilee of the Transvaal District in 1955.²⁰

MEMBERSHIP

The Craft enjoyed a similar influx of candidates in those postwar years as after the Second War of Independence and World War I. A.J. Haak, Provincial Grand Master of the Transvaal Dutch lodges, commented in 1954: "The growth and strength of lodges under the Netherlandic Constitution is really amazing. New lodges would be consecrated in the near future".²¹

A Past District Grand Master, Harry Laver, of the Scottish Transvaal District, had a busy four months. In 1955 he consecrated five new lodges - three in one week - Towerly at Johannesburg, Glen Douglas at Meyerton and Piet Retief at Vereeniging.²²

16. S.A. Masonic Journal, January, 1955, p. 1.

17. Ibid., October, 1955, p. 9.

18. Ibid., July, 1955, p. 40.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., December, 1955, p. 10.

21. Ibid., September, 1954, p. 1.

22. Ibid., July, 1955, pp. 1, 3, 18, 24.

He was pleased, he told members, "to note the increase in the number of Scottish lodges using Afrikaans. There are three at the moment (in the Transvaal and Orange Free State) and another is in the process of formation in Pretoria. Another lodge uses either official language at will".²³

But there was a certain inconsistency in translation from the English ritual. "I would urge uniformity", he said, suggesting an Afrikaans study circle. "The use of Afrikaans has the wholehearted support of the Grand Lodge of Scotland".²⁴

By 1955, the English Constitution was by far the strongest in South Africa as membership figures revealed at the Masonic leaders' conference in Bloemfontein in August, 1955 indicate.²⁵ In its Western Division it had 35 lodges with 2786 members, in the Eastern Division 40 lodges with 1979 members; Natal 42 lodges with 2656 members; Transvaal 86 lodges with 5247 members; Central Division 14 lodges with 680; Orange Free State 13 lodges and 528 members, with Rhodesia having 34 lodges and 1493 members; a total of 264 lodges and 15,278 members.

The Irish Constitution in the Transvaal had 21 lodges and 1210 members; in Rhodesia 5 lodges and 517 members; in Natal 14 lodges and 780 members; in the Southern Cape 9 lodges and 613 members; a total of 49 lodges and 3120 members.²⁶

The Scottish Constitution was second to the English in numbers, with a total of 128 lodges and 8389 members. Its strongest division was Transvaal with 64 lodges and 4223 members.²⁷

23. DGL Transvaal and Orange Free State SC Reports: Meeting, 23 June, 1955, p. 16.

24. Ibid.

25. PMC 2/1/12 DGM WD EC Correspondence July 1953 - June, 1957 Reports: Bloemfontein Conference, August, 1955, p. 11.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

In all, the Netherlandic Constitution had 69 lodges and 4191 members, with 29 lodges and 1359 members in the Transvaal and 40 lodges and 2832 members in the rest of South Africa and Rhodesia.²⁸ Chairman of the Bloemfontein Conference, Cranstoun-Day, reminded delegates - masonic leaders from the four constitutions - that they represented 510 lodges with a membership of 30,978 in South Africa and Rhodesia.²⁹

The number of admissions to the Craft in South Africa began to decline in the 1950s. "A slowing down in numbers of admissions" into the Craft was noted by Cranstoun-Day in 1960, "compared with the great influx of new members which followed the termination of World War II".³⁰ "The peak period of admissions was in 1951 when 152 initiations (in his Western Division) were recorded. Since that year there has been an average annual decrease in that number of approximately 36".³¹ His division dropped in membership from 2600 in 1951 to 2538 in 1961 and 2165 in 1971.³²

This decline from the 1950s could be attributed to the attraction of breakaway movements in South African Freemasonry and the effect of the continued criticism by the Dutch Reformed Church as will be shown.

VISITORS

King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited South Africa in 1947. A loyal address from all English lodges was sent to His Majesty, a Past Grand Master, at Government House, Cape Town, in February of that year.³³ In 1946 the King was invited

28. PMC 2/1/12 DGM WD EC Correspondence July 1953 - June, 1957 Reports: Bloemfontein Conference, August, 1955, p. 11.

29. Ibid.

30. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 7 May, 1960, p. 14.

31. Ibid.

32. PMC DGL WD EC Returns: 1951, 1961, 1971.

33. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1947, p. 27.

in advance of his visit to receive a masonic welcome "within the tyled doors of the City Hall" on his arrival. He declined, however, expressing the wish that all functions on his tour should be of a "general public nature".³⁴

Tributes were paid by masons on the death of King George VI in February, 1952 to his service to the Craft as Past Grand Master.³⁵ Memorial services were held by most lodges.³⁶

Among the senior masonic personalities to visit South Africa after the war was the then newly installed English Grand Master, the Earl of Scarbrough, on a private visit in February 1952.³⁷ He was guest of honour at a dinner in Cape Town attended by senior members of the four constitutions and, on 1 April, addressed 900 masons of all constitutions in Temple Hall, Green Point.³⁸ The Assistant Grand Master of England, Sir Allan Adair, made a strenuous tour of masonic districts in South West Africa, the Union and Rhodesia in 1954.³⁹ The Grand Master Mason of Scotland, Lord Macdonald, and other Grand Lodge officers toured South Africa early in 1956. Highlight of his visit was his opening of Rosslyn Park, a home for aged Freemasons in Johannesburg, on 17 March, 1956.⁴⁰ Lord Macdonald also installed K. Sara as District Grand Master of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, Scottish Constitution. Before an assembly of 1600 masons in the City Hall on 14 March, 1956, he congratulated the district on the formation of lodges working in the Afrikaans language which had "Grand Lodge's full support and which, I feel sure, will

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- 34. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1947, pp. 20-21.
 - 35. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 30 April, 1952, pp. 16-17.
 - 36. Anon: History Charles Warren Lodge 1879 - 1979, p. 20.
 - 37. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 30 April, 1952, pp. 18-19.
 - 38. Ibid., pp. 25 - 26.
 - 39. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1954, pp. 14-15.
 - 40. S.A. Masonic Journal, May, 1956, p. 21.

benefit world Freemasonry".⁴¹

The Grand Master of the Grand East of the Netherlands, C.M.R. Davidson, was greeted enthusiastically on his tour of South Africa in October, 1954, the first by a senior Dutch masonic official since the war.⁴²

A "new bond of South African fellowship" with England came with the formation of South Africa Lodge in London on 6 September, 1948.⁴³ A.T. Penman was installed as its master with Lief Egeland, High Commissioner for South Africa, as senior warden and P.J.W. Fourie as junior warden. The lodge was formed to provide a meeting place in London for visiting South African masons and it was consecrated by the then Grand Master, the Duke of Devonshire.⁴⁴

CHURCH CRITICISM CONTINUED

Attacks by the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk clergymen continued without respite in the postwar years and the Masonic Review of the Report of the Synodical Commission (Cape) of 1942 (referred to in Chapter X) was quoted by masonic leaders in reply.⁴⁵ The D.R.C. Synod at Bloemfontein in 1948, in its criticism of Freemasonry, followed the same lines as the Cape Synod in 1940.⁴⁶ In 1957 the Natal and Transvaal Synods made concerted attacks on the Craft, banning Freemasons from church posts, Cranstoun-Day reported

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- 41. S.A. Masonic Journal, May, 1956, p. 25.
 - 42. PMC 2/1/12 DGM WD EC Correspondence July, 1953 - June, 1957: Graham Botha - DGM, 14 October, 1954.
 - 43. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1949, p. 13.
 - 44. Ibid.
 - 45. PMC 2/1/10 DGM WD EC, Correspondence January, 1947 - December, 1949: DGM Central Division - Cranstoun-Day. 13 May, 1948.
 - 46. NGK Acta Vrystaatse Kerk Synodi: 1948, pp. 343, 515.

to London.⁴⁷ However, many masons left both the N.G.K. and the Gereformeerde Kerk to join the Hervormde Kerk which had not denounced the movement, claimed The Cape Times.⁴⁸

"Within the last week or so in April 1957, further attacks on Freemasonry have been made by two synods of the Dutch Reformed Church (Transvaal and Natal), which have warned its members to beware of the 'social evils' of 'the idolization of sport, sex, filth, Freemasonry, drink and Communism'. Freemasonry also encouraged, it was claimed, an unnatural and irreligious moral code which was dangerous to the nation; and was a religion designed to undermine scriptural religion, Cranstoun-Day reported to his district.⁴⁹ "It is apparent that the knowledge of these leaders of the church is very scanty, for, by implication, they have besmirched the memories of Presidents Johannes Brand and Francois Reitz, both of the Orange Free State Republic; Marthinus Pretorius, President of both the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republics, President Rev. T.P. Burgers of the Transvaal; and also such eminent figures as Sir John Truter, first Chief Justice of the Cape; Melius de Villiers, Chief Justice of the Free State; Lord De Villiers, first Chief Justice of the Union; Christoffel Brand, first Speaker of the House of Assembly, and a host of other members of the great Afrikaans-speaking families of South Africa. Freemasonry has not changed since those men were members".⁵⁰

While the Freemasons were organising and welcoming the new Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in 1961, the Cape Church Synod

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- 47. NGK Acta Natalse Synodi, 1957, pp. 188, 190, 345;
NGK Acta Transvaalse Synodi, 1957, pp. 388, 389, 398 - 421;
PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence, 1957 - 1960:
Cranstoun-Day - UGLE, 24 June, 1957.
 - 48. The Cape Times, 19 June, 1957: "Freemasons Leave D.R. Church after Ban".
 - 49. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1957, pp. 17 - 18.
 - 50. Ibid., p. 18.

surprisingly heard members supporting Freemasonry.⁵¹ A report from the Synod's ad hoc commission said church members should be warned against deviating into false doctrines.⁵² It recommended the Synod should warn church members not to become masons.⁵³ First to start the uproar was the Rev. D.P. Olivier of Riebeeck West who said the "talk of the Freemasons being sinister people was nothing but fantasy. The subject had been ridden to death at one synod after another. To prevent people from holding office in the church simply because they were Freemasons was unthinkable", he said, adding that some members of his congregation who were Freemasons were "among the staunchest Christians in his flock".⁵⁴ An elder from Riebeeck West, Mr. D.P. de Klerk, said he had once been a Freemason but "he had been in good company for such eminent Afrikaners as President Brand, President Reitz, Lord De Villiers and C.J. Langenhoven had also been Freemasons".⁵⁵ Freemasonry, founded on Christian principles, was not a religion but a philosophy of life based on "the eternal truths", he said. The Cape Synod decided to drop the matter.⁵⁶

"Turn the other cheek" to the present church criticism, advised the Deputy Grand Master C. de Wet soon after the founding of the new Grand Lodge in Southern Africa in 1961.⁵⁷ Masons did so but the onslaught continued. The next year, the General Synod of the church outlawed Freemasons from becoming members of the church.⁵⁸ Speakers pointed out that the provincial synods had already come out against it and the

51. The Cape Times, 9 November, 1961: "Masons defended at Synod", p. 7.

52. NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1961, p. 637.

53. Ibid.

54. The Cape Times, 9 November, 1961: "Masons Defended at Synod", p. 7.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid; NGK Acta Kaapse Kerk Synodi: 1961, p. 160.

57. GLSA PGL Transvaal, Correspondence, 1960 - 1974: De Wet - DGH, 12 November, 1961.

58. NGK Acta Algemene Synodi: 1962, pp. 103, 249.

synod decided to publish a pamphlet explaining its 'outlaw' decision.⁵⁹

According to The Sunday Times report of November, 1962, of the 35,000 Freemasons in South Africa, half were Afrikaans-speaking and most of them belonged to this church.⁶⁰ A distinguished Afrikaans writer, Herman Steytler, who had been a Freemason for 30 years and was Assistant Provincial Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, wrote in defence of Freemasonry in Die Burger of 27 October, 1962, pointing out that it was not a religion but strove "after the betterment of the brotherhood of men through the Fatherhood of God".⁶¹

Under a nom-de-plume "X" Cranstoun-Day sent The Cape Argus a copy of a declaration by the United Grand Lodge of England issued in September, 1962 following Press exposés of the Craft in Britain. It was published in December, 1962.⁶²

The Board of General Purposes of England submitted to the Grand Lodge meeting on 12 September, 1962, the following:

"THE RELATIONSHIP OF MASONRY AND RELIGION"

"The Board has been giving the most earnest consideration to this subject, being convinced that it is of fundamental importance to the reputation and well-being of English

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- 59. NGK Acta Algemene Synodi: 1962. p. 278; The Cape Argus; 16 October, 1962: "NGK Bans Freemasons Church Membership".
 - 60. Sunday Times, 11 November, 1962: "Church Ban on Freemasons: OFS May Act"
 - 61. Die Burger, Byvoegsel, 27 October, 1962, p. 14; PMC 2/2/2 File DRC Attacks: Steytler - Cranstoun-Day, 28 December, 1962.
 - 62. PMC 2/1/14 DGM WD EC Correspondence, January 1961 - November, 1963: London - Cranstoun-Day, 15 November, 1962; The Cape Argus, 4 December, 1962: "Freemasons and Religion, Grand Lodge Statement on Misunderstandings".

Freemasonry that no misunderstanding should exist either inside or outside the Craft.⁶³

"It cannot too strongly be asserted that Masonry is neither a religion nor a substitute for religion. Masonry seeks to inculcate in its members a standard of conduct and behaviour which it believes to be acceptable to all creeds, but studiously refrains from intervening in the field of dogma or theology.⁶⁴

"Masonry therefore is not a competitor with religion though, in the sphere of human conduct, it may be hoped that its teaching will be complementary to that of religion.⁶⁵

"On the other hand a basic requirement is that every member of the Order shall believe in a Supreme Being and the stress laid upon his duty towards Him should be sufficient evidence to all but the wilfully prejudiced that Masonry is an upholder of religion since it both requires a man to have some form of religious belief before he can be admitted as a Mason, and expects him when admitted to go on practising his religion", it added.⁶⁶

It declared that masonic rules, prayers and ceremonies must be confined to the lodge room, that "vocal music associated with religious worship" be excluded from ceremonies and that there be no active participation by masons in burial or cremation services.⁶⁷

63. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 12 September, 1962, p. 211.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

In 1963 the church intensified its attacks and fewer candidates for the Craft came forward.⁶⁸ The church campaign made itself felt more in the country districts, preventing men applying for membership. Reporting to his Grand Lodge in 1967, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, E. Conradie, said: "There are immense difficulties facing lodges in the Platteland. They are meeting violent opposition".⁶⁹

It was the Government and not the DRC which decided to investigate Freemasonry - and other so-called secret organisations. Prime Minister Dr. H.F. Verwoerd agreed in 1964, on the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition, Sir De Villiers Graaff, to appoint a judicial commission to investigate the influence and activities of all secret organisations, which included the Freemasons, the Broederbond and the Sons of England and to determine if these bodies were a danger to the State or to peace.⁷⁰ Senior masons gave evidence while the Commissioner, Mr. Justice D.H. Botha, had access to the minutes and records of Provincial and District lodges and private lodges. In conclusion, Mr. Justice Botha found that Freemasonry in South Africa "is not guilty of any conduct mentioned in the terms of reference".⁷¹

Commenting on the Judge's finding, Cranstoun-Day told his District Grand Lodge: "We have the full report as submitted to Parliament. It is a comprehensive and most impartial document and an unimpeachable testimony to our integrity, having been prepared by the Hon. Mr. Justice D.H. Botha, a Judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the Republic".⁷²

68. GLSA PGL Transvaal Correspondence 1960 - 1974, Report: Meeting, 28 February, 1963.

69. GLSA GL Reports 1963 - 1982: Meeting, 19 August, 1967, p.5.

70. RP No. 20/1965, Report of Commission of Inquiry into secret organisations: Terms of Reference, p. 1; PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1965, pp.16 - 18.

71. RP No. 20/1965, Report of Commission of Inquiry into secret organisations, pp. 10 - 19; The Cape Argus, 12 March, 1965, p. 7.

72. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1965, p.16.

"After a very full investigation in which he unreservedly accepted the evidence of our representatives; and the Aims and Relationships of the Craft, as set out by Grand Lodge, he gave what, I venture to think, may be regarded as a judicial judgment in our favour."⁷³

"To any intelligent mind it should be a complete refutation of the scandalous charges which have been made against us and should cause our opponents to 'think again'", he said.⁷⁴

His opponents did "think again" and criticism was stilled, so much so that, in 1970, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, E. Conradie, reported: "Some years ago (in 1962) when the campaign against Freemasonry had reached the height of its ferocity, many men were afraid that membership of the Order might harm not only themselves in their private avocation but might also have a serious effect on their families."⁷⁵

"The inevitable result was that we had quite a few resignations and that many of our members were afraid to admit their membership of the Craft and to associate themselves too closely with the work of the Order and many were hesitant to apply for membership".⁷⁶

"Those days are fortunately gone. The attack on Freemasonry has dwindled from a mighty stream to an insignificant trickle of which neither masons nor the public in general take very much notice".⁷⁷

"Today it is a matter of pride with most of us to admit openly membership of the Craft if we are asked and once again masonry

73. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1965, p.16.

74. Ibid.

75. GLSA GL Reports 1963 - 1982: Meeting, 29 August, 1970, p. 3.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

is drawing to its ranks the more important and influential men in our communities", he said.⁷⁸

Twelve years later, in 1982, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of South Africa, W.J. van Zyl said in an interview with the writer: "As an Afrikaner, I feel concerned about the attitude of the D.R. Church to Freemasonry. In 1961 the Synod resolved that Church Councils could refuse sacraments to masons. However, at present, the church opposition is subdued".⁷⁹

S.A. ORDER OF FREEMASONS

The movement for a Grand Lodge in South Africa emerged in the early postwar years as inner divisions within the Craft provided further stress and strain. A group of Netherlandic Freemasons in the Transvaal resolved to set up an entirely South African Grand Lodge under the title of the S.A. Order of Freemasons.⁸⁰

In a printed circular published in March, 1952 from Johannesburg, the organisers wrote: "The need for a Constitution which shall be truly South African in spirit and character and yet in no way deviate from the ancient and accepted usages and tenets of Freemasonry, has long been felt by Freemasons in this country, irrespective of the Constitution to which they belong. On numerous occasions throughout the years, expression has been given to the desire that South Africa, like other countries, should have its own Grand Lodge."⁸¹

"More than fifty years ago attempts were made to bring into

78. GLSA GL Reports 1963 - 1982: Meeting, 29 August, 1970, p.3.

79. Interview GLSA Grand Secretary, W.J. van Zyl, 6 September, 1982, Johannesburg.

80. PMC 2/1/11.DGM WD EC Correspondence, November, 1949 - June, 1953; Circular March, 1952, p. 2.

81. Ibid.

being a South African Constitution, or, perhaps more correctly, to unite the Freemasons of South Africa under one banner. These attempts proved abortive, yet Brethren have never abandoned the hope that, at some time and in some way, the ideal, namely that South Africa may have its own Constitution, will be attained.⁸²

"This desire for a South African Constitution is greater than ever, and, in consequence, a small group of Brethren - with the courage of their convictions, and in the sincere belief that such a move will bring about greater harmony, understanding and tolerance - set themselves the task of framing the South African Constitution, and thus answering a national call.

"A small working committee was formed and 21 January, 1951, saw the birth of the South African Order of Freemasons".⁸³

An inaugural body was formed to plan and formulate a South African Constitution. Among its terms of reference were:

To ensure that every step taken would be legal and constitutional;

To maintain and promote harmonious relationship and co-operation between the South African Constitution and the four existing Constitutions in South Africa;

To devise means and to provide the methods whereby Freemasonry shall continue to be the Progressive Science that it is intended to be;⁸⁴

To formulate a Constitution for South Africa and to convert the inaugural body into a Grand Council.⁸⁵

The Grand Council having been formed, resolved:

82. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence, November 1949 - June 1953; Circular March, 1952, p. 2.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

"That the South African Order of Freemasons shall in no way be in opposition to, or in conflict with, any existing Order as accepted and recognised throughout the world and that membership of the South African Order of Freemasons be conferred upon those who subscribe to the Grand principles of Truth, Morality and Brotherly Love, and who promise fealty and allegiance to the Order, and that such membership be obtained through initiation or affiliation, according to ancient custom".⁸⁶

The Grand Council resolved "to provide spiritual and moral guidance for those who believe in eternity, are willing to give strict observance to the law of God and the laws of the country, believe in the sanctity of the home, are prepared to respect the rights and interests of others and are anxious to practise the first essential of Freemasonry: Know Thyself."⁸⁷

It added: "The true and sincere aim of the South African Order of Freemasons is to weld together a brotherhood of South African members of the Order, which shall be a moral force, acknowledged by all free men inside and outside the Order, as a body of men whose single purpose in life is to serve others and do unto them as we would in similar circumstances wish them to do unto us".⁸⁸

Concerned about earlier rumours about the formation of the S.A. Order, the masonic leaders in the Transvaal met in November, 1951 to consider them and to learn that some masons had already been invited to join the Order.⁸⁹

A printed invitation was sent to these masonic heads to attend

86. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence, November, 1949 - June, 1953; Circular March, 1952, p. 3.

87. Ibid., p. 4.

88. Ibid., p. 4.

89. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November, 1949 - June, 1953: DGM Transvaal - DGM WD, 12 March, 1952.

the investiture of the President, officers and members of the Grand Council of the Order on 13 March, 1952.⁹⁰ Two days before that occurred, J.H. Vivian, head of the Transvaal English lodges, and W.E. Marsh, head of the Transvaal Scottish lodges, interviewed Mr. Ben Havenga, instigator of the breakaway movement, who said he had been approached in January 1951 by several Freemasons to form a purely South African Grand Lodge which would have no allegiance to bodies oversea.⁹¹ It was agreed to hold a conference of all masonic constitutions as soon as possible. This was held at the Langham Hotel, Johannesburg, on 26 March, attended by representatives of all the constitutions and Mr. Havenga and four of his colleagues.⁹²

After discussion, Havenga said there was no South African Grand Lodge in South Africa but there was a "national urge" for a South African Grand Lodge. If the present constitutions would sponsor this Grand Lodge, he and his associates would drop out but, whether or not they sponsored it, it would be formed.⁹³

He was reminded of the official procedure for the formation of a Grand Lodge where a Grand Lodge could only be formed by three disaffected lodges and not by individuals and with the approval of the Grand Lodges exercising jurisdiction in the area. Two-thirds of lodges in existing constitutions must agree to its formation.⁹⁴ Marsh warned Havenga and his party of the danger of political influences.⁹⁵

90. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence, November 1949 - June, 1953: DGM Transvaal - DGM WD, 12 March, 1952, p. 2.

91. Ibid., p. 3.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid., p. 4.

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid.

In reply, Mr. Havenga and his colleagues said that all they had done had been constitutional, that no lodges had been formed and no workings had taken place.⁹⁶ If, however, there were opposition from the existing constitutions, Havenga warned that his Order would become clandestine.⁹⁷

Accordingly the masonic heads agreed to examine the merits of the formation of a South African Grand Lodge.⁹⁸

Following the investiture meeting of Havenga's Grand Lodge on 13 March, 1952, they were told that he had gone ahead with his plans. He had been installed as President of the S.A. Order of Freemasons before 35 persons and his officers, mainly from Netherlandic lodges, had been obligated.⁹⁹

Letters passed between masonic leaders, all strongly disapproving of the Order and its origin and suggesting that it not be recognised.¹⁰⁰

In the Transvaal the heads of the four constitutions were united in their stand against the Order but were careful not to give the impression they were completely opposed to the formation of a South African Constitution should it be required in the future.¹⁰¹ They issued a statement replying to Mr. Havenga's request that they sponsor the S.A. Order "either as an additional constitution or as a basis for a united Grand Lodge of South Africa".¹⁰² The statement declared: "We recognise the right of Freemasons in the Transvaal and in South Africa to form or promote a body which may be established as a Grand Lodge in South Africa,

96. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November 1949 - June 1953: DGM Transvaal - DGM WD, 12 March, 1952, p.5.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.

99. Ibid.

100. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November 1949 - June, 1953: DGM ED - DGM Transvaal, 22 May, 1952.

101. Ibid., DGM Transvaal - all DGMs, 29 May, 1952.

102. Ibid., Statement by DGMs, 27 May, 1952.

subject to the proper formalities and correct constitutional procedure and in terms of any agreements that may exist between the Grand Lodges presently operating in this country; and we state that we are not opposed in general principle to any such development;¹⁰³

"We regret that we are unable to accept the proposals as the need for a South African body has not been proven. It has not been possible to ascertain from the evidence and statements before us how many qualified members of lodges do, in fact, request that such a step be taken;¹⁰⁴

"The constitutional basis of the proposed South African Order of Freemasons has not been capable of examination, and we are not aware of the suggested regulations, properly authenticated, under which the South African Order has operated;¹⁰⁵

"In spite of statements to the contrary, we cannot help but feel that the leadership and direction of the South African Order thus far, has been coloured and influenced by feelings of personal animosity and ill-feeling, and we further feel deeply and sincerely that, should a masonic authority be established in this atmosphere, it would be undesirable and may lead to misunderstanding and confusion;¹⁰⁶

"We firmly believe that the present time in South Africa is not propitious for the formation or promotion of a Grand Lodge of South Africa, either independently as a fifth Constitution in amity with the existing four Constitutions, or as a union of all Constitutions".¹⁰⁷

103. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November 1949 - June 1953: Statement by DGMs, 27 May, 1952, p. 1.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid., p. 2.

"We earnestly request Bro. Havenga and his associates to take no further steps to proceed with the formation of the present South African Order of Freemasons".¹⁰⁸

It was signed by J.H. Vivian, District Grand Master of the Transvaal English lodges, E.W. Snell for R. Bateman, Provincial Grand Master (Northern Division) of Irish Lodges, W.E. Marsh, District Grand Master of the Transvaal and Free State Scottish lodges, and A.J. Haak, Provincial Grand Master of the Dutch lodges in the Transvaal.¹⁰⁹

On instructions from their Grand Lodges overseas the four constitutions in South Africa in June 1952 issued circulars to all their lodges prohibiting members from attending meetings of the S.A. Order of Freemasons.¹¹⁰

When the English masonic heads met in Cape Town in conference in November, 1952, they agreed to await developments in the S.A. Order situation and reported there was no indication in any district that a United Grand Lodge for South Africa was desired.¹¹¹

But the Order attracted some masons - to their cost. Again warning masons not to visit the S.A. Order or admit their members, C.E. Robbie, head of the Scottish lodges in the Eastern Division, revealed: "Already a number of Transvaal Brethren have been expelled for attending meetings of this spurious body".¹¹²

"At least four brethren of the Scottish Constitution have been expelled for attending meetings of this Order in the Transvaal",

108. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November 1949 - June, 1953: Statement by DGMs, 27 May, 1952, p. 2.

109. Ibid.

110. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November 1949 - June, 1953: UGLE - Cranstoun-Day, 30 May, 1952; DGM Transvaal circular, 24 June, 1952.

111. Ibid., Minutes conference Cape Town, 17 November, 1952, pp. 1 - 2.

112. S.A. Masonic Journal, November, 1954, p. 18.

District Grand Master R.B. Kelly told his Scottish Natal lodges in 1954.¹¹³

The heads of the English, Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic constitutions in South Africa met in Bloemfontein on 1 and 2 August, 1955 to discuss the S.A. Order and other common problems.¹¹⁴ Unanimously, they agreed the S.A. Order was irregular and could not be recognised as it did not conform with the basic principles laid down by Grand Lodges for recognition - a belief in a Supreme Being and a ban on political and religious discussion in lodges.¹¹⁵ All lodges would be told again that members must not attend meetings of the S.A. Order nor to admit their members under penalties of suspension or expulsion.¹¹⁶ Those who had "erred in ignorance" in joining the S.A. Order would be allowed to apply again for readmission.¹¹⁷

The conference recorded: "The time has not yet come for any change in the masonic status by the formation of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa as no general desire exists for the establishment of such a body".¹¹⁸

In 1957, six years after its formation, the S.A. Order wrote to the Transvaal masonic leaders asking if they were prepared to "discuss the possible cooperation between our Order" and the four constitutions.¹¹⁹ It pointed out that its ceremonies conformed strictly to masonic usage "as the many visiting brethren of the four working constitutions in our

113. NSA DGL Natal SC Reports: Meeting, 3 April, 1954, p.170.

114. PMC 2/1/12 DGM WD EC Correspondence July, 1953 - June, 1957: Conference Bloemfontein, 1 and 2 August, 1955.

115. Ibid., p. 6.

116. Ibid., p. 7.

117. Ibid.

118. Ibid.

119. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1957 - 1960: S.A. Order - Transvaal, 19 August, 1957.

country can testify".¹²⁰

The S.A. Order did not conform with the basic principles required by the Grand Lodges, the Transvaal leaders replied.¹²¹ These included primarily a declaration of belief in a Supreme Being and, as well, prohibition of discussion of religious or political matters in lodges.¹²²

The S.A. Order then tried another tactic to win recognition. It applied to the Government for registration in May 1959 of the name of the association - "the S.A. Order of Freemasons". Objections had to be submitted within 3 months.¹²³ Hearing of this, Cranstoun-Day appealed to all districts to lodge the "strongest protests without delay as registration of this spurious body would be very dangerous for us who also use the word 'Freemasons' and this would be infringing the Act".¹²⁴

In his official objection to the Secretary of the Interior, Cranstoun-Day pointed out that the so-called S.A. Order had not been regularly constituted nor recognised by any Grand Lodge and "is regarded by us as being imitative of Freemasonry and therefore clandestine and irregular".¹²⁵

"We therefore strongly object to this roundabout attempt by the applicant body styling itself the S.A. Order of Freemasons ... to secure some kind of public recognition by registering its

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- 120. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1957 - 1960: S.A. Order - Transvaal, 19 August, 1957.
 - 121. Ibid., Masonic heads - L.E. Smit, 27 September, 1957.
 - 122. PMC 2/1/11 DGM WD EC Correspondence November 1949 - June, 1953: DGM CD - DGM Transvaal, 22 May, 1952.
 - 123. Government Gazette No. 6234, 26 May, 1959, p. 17.
 - 124. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1957 - 1960: DGM - all DGMs, circular, 26 May, 1959.
 - 125. Ibid., DGM WD EC - Secretary Interior, 1 July, 1959, Ref. 1175/81

name and thus purporting to be an association of Antient Free and Accepted Masons; and also to the use of titles which, by long usage and established custom, belong only to the said Fraternity.¹²⁶

"We therefore trust the Secretary for the Interior will protect the name, rights and titles belonging to the Antient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons ... against usurpation by the applicant body", he added.¹²⁷

All district and provincial Grand Lodges of the English, Scottish and Netherlandic constitutions joined in objecting to the application. However this united front was broken as the Irish Grand Lodge forbade its representatives to participate.¹²⁸

Their objections were turned down by the Department, however, and the name of "The South African Order of Freemasons" was registered in the Government Gazette of 14 October, 1960.¹²⁹

By then, the Deputy Grand Master for Southern Africa of the Netherlandic Constitution, Col. G. Graham Botha, was already taking definite steps to form a Grand Lodge comprising all the Netherlandic lodges in Southern Africa.¹³⁰ Cranstoun-Day feared this official registration of the S.A. Order's name would hamper his efforts.¹³¹

126. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1957 - 1960: DGM WD EC - Secretary Interior, 1 July, 1959, Ref. 1175/81.

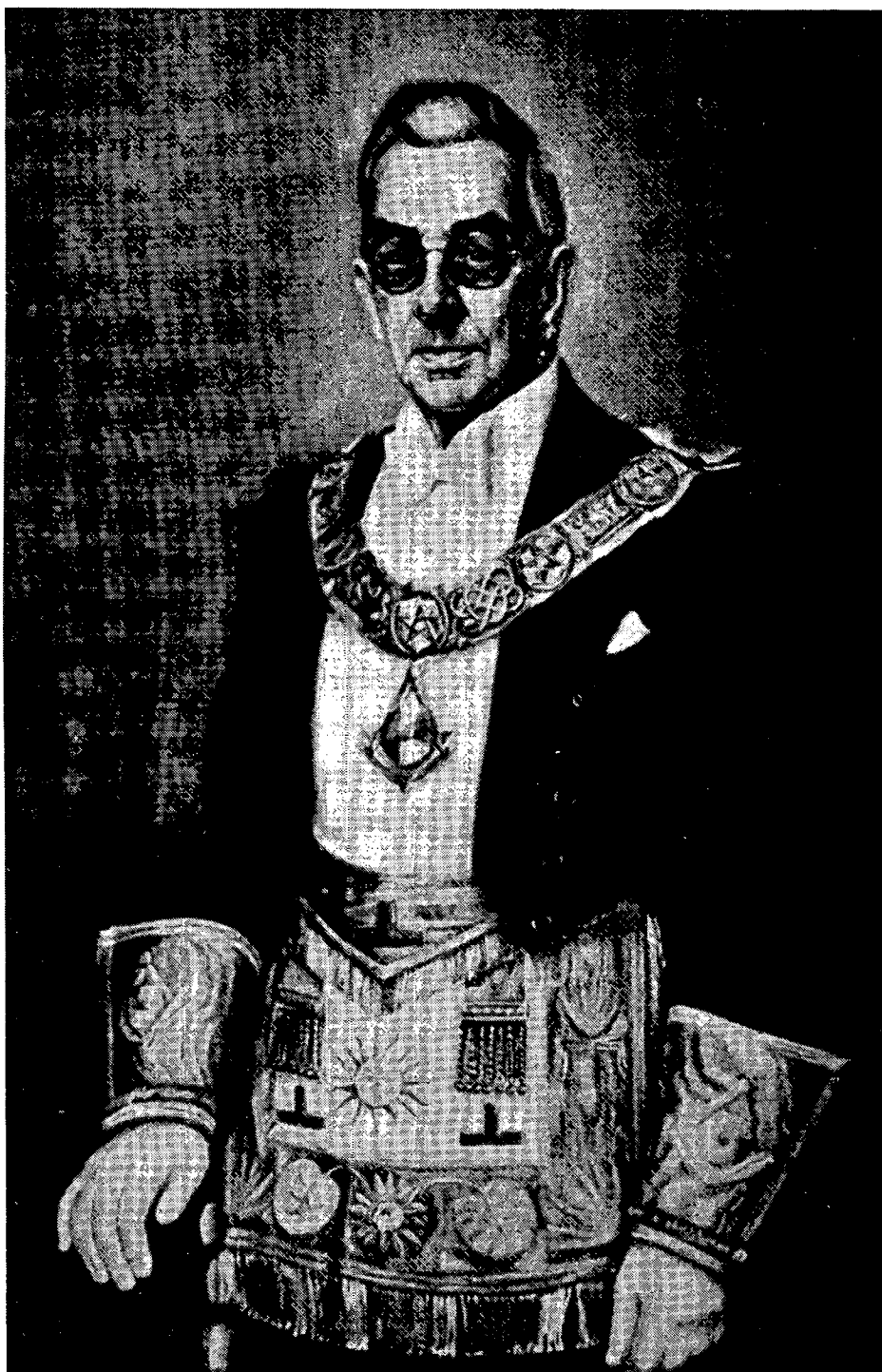
127. Ibid.

128. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1957 - 1960: Cranstoun-Day - UGLE, 18 August, 1959.

129. Government Gazette No. 6548, 14 October, 1960, p. 10.

130. PMC 2/1/15 File Grand Lodge Southern Africa; S.A. Order of Freemasons: Cranstoun-Day - UGLE, 14 November, 1960.

131. Ibid.



COLIN GRAHAM BOTHA

1st Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Southern
Africa 1961 - 1966. (From a painting)

Master in the Transvaal, J.G. Folly, the "masonic nuisance" had now ceased to exist.¹³⁹ But the reasons for the formation of the "S.A. Order" - the only "irregular" masonic body to be set up in South Africa's masonic Craft history - are still not clear. Personal ambition may have been the cause, or was it the wish to have an organisation with no ties overseas, which, in some way, reflected considerable opinion in South Africa in the 1950s towards the formation of a Republic?

139. PMC 2/1/15 File Grand Lodge of Southern Africa; S.A. Order of Freemasons: Cranstoun-Day - Folly, 5 October, 1961.

CHAPTER XII

FORMATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

In the immediate postwar years, South Africa, once one of the leaders in the Commonwealth fight against the Axis, found itself under a fierce onslaught of words from its critics overseas over its racial policies.¹ As in neighbouring African states, the black man achieved independence, the whites in South Africa saw these changes and the overseas criticism as a threat to their own survival.² Their resistance was fundamental to the voting pattern in the 1948 elections when the Herenigde Party under D.F. Malan and the Afrikaner Party under N.C. Havenga assumed power.³

The consolidation of the emerging National Party in the 1953 elections and the continuing growing economic strength of South Africa provided incentive to accelerate the removal of the last symbols of British imperialism - British subject status, right of appeal to the Privy Council, the Union Jack and the British anthem "God Save the Queen", and the substitution of the British coinage with a South African decimal coinage.⁴

One last goal remained - the establishment of South Africa as a Republic. On 5 October, 1960, white South Africans

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1. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa, pp. 424 - 426 (B.J. Liebenberg: From Statute of Westminster to Republic of South Africa, 1931 - 1961).
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., p. 427.
 4. Ibid., pp. 437-438.

decided in a referendum by 52 per cent to 48 per cent in favour of a republic.⁵

Following severe criticism of South Africa's racial policies by other members of the Commonwealth, Prime Minister Dr. H.F. Verwoerd withdrew his application for South Africa to remain within that body. The Republic of South Africa came into being on 31 May, 1961.⁶ On 22 April in the same year the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa was formally inaugurated.⁷ Its formation was a major event in the history of Freemasonry in South Africa and represented the first definitive move - and the only one up to the time of writing - towards the creation of a United Grand Lodge for South Africa.

As recorded earlier there had been continuing campaigns for the unification of South African Freemasonry since the appeal by Lodge Harmony at Richmond in September, 1870, these campaigns being strongly influenced by political and economic events.⁸

For instance, the move to responsible government in the Cape in 1872 resulted in a mass masonic meeting to discuss unity

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5. C.F.J. Muller (ed.): 500 Years A History of South Africa p. 438 (B.J. Liebenberg: From Statute of Westminster to Republic of South Africa, 1931 - 1961).
 6. Ibid., pp. 438-439.
 7. PMC 2/1/15 File SA GL: Cranstoun-Day - London, 24 April, 1961.
 8. Chapter I: First Call for Independence.

in Cape Town in 1876, which proved abortive.⁹ The growth of masonic lodges in the Cape, Natal, the Free State and the Transvaal in the 1890s as a result of the diamond and gold discoveries saw renewed calls for a united Grand Lodge for all South Africa and then for a Grand Lodge for the booming Transvaal.¹⁰

The political movement for Union in the early 1900s after the Second War of Independence was matched by a strong masonic drive for its own unity which was only curtailed by the outbreak of the first world war and opposition from masonic leaders who remained steadfast to their loyalties to overseas grand lodges.¹¹

From 1948, when Afrikaner nationalism became the dominant political force in South Africa, the movement among Freemasons for a South African Grand Lodge again emerged, to be given impetus by the Republic campaign of the late 1950s. But the formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa surprisingly did not stem purely from local desires but rather from a combination of events in the masonic Grand Lodges of Europe.

The masonic picture in that continent in the postwar years was chaotic as Grand Lodges, suppressed by the Axis forces, gradually began to form themselves again and determine which neighbouring Grand Lodge was to be recognised or not.

T.N. Cranstoun-Day, head of English Western Division lodges in South Africa, listed in 1948 grand lodges recognised by the British Grand Lodges whose members could be admitted safely

9. Chapter II: Move to Independence.

10. Chapter II: 1892 Independence Move.

11. Chapter V: Closer Union.

into South African lodges.¹² They were the Grand Lodges in each state of the United States, the Grand East of the Netherlands, Grand Lodges of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the Grand Lodge Alpina of Switzerland, Grande Loge Nationale, Independante et Reguliere for France and the French colonies, and certain Grand Lodges in South and Central America, the West Indies, Liberia and the Phillipines.¹³

Grand lodges not recognised were the Grand Orient of France, Grand Orient of Belgium, the Grand Lodges in Italy, Portugal, Spain, North Africa and Egypt.¹⁴

In once-occupied countries, lodges were beginning to work again but there appeared a tendency for certain political elements to infiltrate into the masonic fraternity, he said. In these circumstances no individuals who claimed to be members of lodges in Germany, Yugoslavia, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Greece, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary should be allowed to enter any lodges in South Africa until the status of Freemasonry in those countries had been regularised, he warned.¹⁵ Those who associated with these "irregular" masons would face disciplinary action.¹⁶

The amity between the four constitutions in South Africa - the English, Irish, Scottish and Netherlandic, was in sharp contrast to the confusion in Europe. Indeed, a conference of District and Provincial Grand Masters and their deputies meeting at Bloemfontein on 1 and 2 August, 1955 had reaffirmed their fraternal feelings and unanimously recorded their opinion "that the time has not yet come for any change in their

12. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1948, p. 21.

13. Ibid., p. 22.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., pp. 22 - 23.

16. Ibid., p. 23.

masonic status by the formation of a United Grand Lodge of Southern Africa as no general desire at present exists for the establishment of such a body".¹⁷ The masons there represented 510 lodges with a membership of 30,987.¹⁸

They were strong enough in numbers to combat and finally crush the rival S.A. Order of Freemasons, whose fate is recorded in the previous chapter. They could do little about the activities of the Luxemburg Convention, a gathering of Masonic Grand Lodges of Europe formed after the war to bring unity, or the efforts of the Grand Master of the Grand East of the Netherlands, C.M.R. Davidson, to bring about European unity in the ensuing years. On 11 October, 1958, a conference was held in Brussels at the headquarters of the Grand Orient of Belgium between Grand Masters and representatives of the Grand Lodge of France, Swisse Alpina, Luxemburg, United Grand Lodge of Germany and the Grand Orients of France and Belgium.¹⁹ Davidson said the idea behind the conference was simple. All the constitutions represented, including the Grand Orients of France and Belgium, had originally been "regular", recognised by other Grand Lodges, specifically England.²⁰ Netherlands would gladly enter into fraternal relations with the two Grand Orients provided their lodges recognised God, the Great Architect of the Universe, and worked with the "three Great Lights" - a masonic term for the Volume of the Sacred Law (the Bible) and the masonic emblems of the square and compasses, he said.²¹ A French spokesman, Chevallier, pointed out his Grand Orient could not force lodges to change their customs, while the representatives of the Grand Orient of Belgium stressed that

17. PMC 2/1/12 DGM WD EC Correspondence, July 1953 - June, 1957: Bloemfontein Conference Report, p. 6.

18. Ibid., p. 11.

19. GEN Grand Master's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: Brussels Conference, 11 October, 1958, p. 1.

20. Ibid., p. 2.

21. Ibid.

the "three Great Lights" had never been part of its ritual despite three unsuccessful attempts to introduce them. They asked if there were other symbols of fellowship that could be used?²² Davidson replied that a masonic obligation should be taken on a sacred volume. The Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries would not recognise any Grand Lodge not adhering to the Great Lights.²³ One of the representatives of the Grand Orient of Belgium, Mardens, said that 95 per cent of the Freemasons in Belgium were atheists and would not accept the Volume of the Sacred Law.²⁴

In June, 1953, the Netherlands had broken off relations with the Grand Orients of France and Belgium because these constitutions admitted atheists, pointed out Moriamé of Belgium.²⁵ The Grand Master of Belgium, Leopold Remouchamps, added: "In our constitution, with its majority of atheist members, some of the brethren would be irritated by the Lights".²⁶ In the Grand Orient of Belgium, he said, there could be no question of proposing measures which might give the impression that consciences were being forced.²⁷ In reply, Davidson said that for masonry to be universal, the Lights were indispensable but that no particular interpretation of them was demanded - a remark he was to regret later.²⁸

There was no compulsion by the Grand Lodges represented to force the Grand Orients of France and Belgium to reintroduce the use of the Lights. "The decision ... should be made in complete freedom. It was only to be hoped that your sovereign assemblies will decide on what seems to lead to

22. GEN Grand Master's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: Brussels Conference, 11 October, 1958, p. 4.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 5.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., p. 8.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., p. 9.

union and universality", urged the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of France, Dupuy.²⁹

The meeting came to no decision, but Davidson's remark that no particular interpretation was demanded of the Three Great Lights and his amplification the next year brought swift reaction from the "regular" Grand Lodges. At a meeting in Paris in 1960 under the authority of the Grand Lodge of France, also unrecognised by England, Davidson, according to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, affirmed that no lodge had the "right, competence or ability to define a symbol and, more particularly, of the symbols of the Great Architect of the Universe or of the Three Great Lights. It is only personally and individually that a Freemason has the right, competence and ability to interpret symbols and to define their meaning. It is a consequence of the practice of masonic tolerance that enables every Freemason so to exercise his freedom of conscience", Davidson was reported to have said.³⁰

His words were used by the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland to inform Dr. T. Vogel, Grand Master of the newly-formed United Grand Lodge of Germany, that he must withdraw recognition of the Grand Lodge of France or, in return, not be recognised by the three Grand Lodges.³¹ Davidson was speaking for all members of the Luxemburg Convention of which Germany was a member, Vogel was told by Scotland. In Paris, Davidson had claimed that the Bible need not be regarded "as a record of God's revealed Will, thus making it possible for an appearance of regularity to be assumed by persons who have no real belief in a personal deity or in the Bible as a revelation of His Divine Will".³²

29. GEN Grand Master's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: Brussels Conference, 11 October, 1958, p. 9.

30. GEN Witboek Maart 1960: GL Scotland - UGL Germany, 12 May, 1959, pp. 5 - 6.

31. Ibid., p. 6.

32. Ibid.

Davidson had proposed a charter for the three French masonic bodies in France - the Grand Orient of France, Grand Lodge of France and the French National Grand Lodge - whereby they agreed to recognise the Great Architect of the Universe and take obligation on the Three Great Lights.³³ The Grand Orient of France removed belief in God as a condition of membership from its constitution in 1877 and the regular Grand Lodges suspended relations with it in 1878.³⁴ The Grand Lodge of France, never recognised by England, at first did not require the Volume of the Sacred Law at its ceremonies but, in 1953, a majority of its lodges agreed to do so.³⁵ The French National Grand Lodge, formed in 1913, had always been recognised as regular by England.³⁶

Though the second named, the Grand Lodge of France, did exhibit the Volume of the Sacred Law, England, Ireland and Scotland did not believe that it had expressed any belief in the Great Architect of the Universe as a Divine Being or in the Volume of the Sacred Law, both of which were basic principles for recognition as "regular" masonry.³⁷ According to Davidson's comments that no one had any right to impose an interpretation of a symbol, the Volume of the Sacred Law could be regarded as a piece of furniture, which need have no spiritual significance to those who used it.³⁸ Alex F. Buchan, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Scotland continued: "We are all convinced that any effort made by the Grand Lodge of France to appear regular is not a matter of heart but of expediency for, otherwise, they would have discontinued their association with the atheistic Grand Orient of France which they have not done".³⁹ "Doubts therefore

33. GEN Witboek Maart 1960: GL Scotland - UGL Germany, 12 May, 1959, p. 7.

34. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 2 March, 1960, p. 5.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., p. 6.

37. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: GL Scotland - UGL Germany, 12 May, 1959, p. 7.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

have arisen in our minds as to the soundness of the Luxemburg Convention which treats on equal terms with bodies that, in our view, are irregular. No recognition could be sincerely extended by us to a Grand Lodge that permits such intercourse", he warned the United Grand Lodge of Germany.⁴⁰

Having been sent a copy of Scotland's letter to Germany, Davidson swiftly replied, explaining that he had been asked by the Grand Orient of France to discuss the requirements for return to regularity.⁴¹ For regularity he had told the Grand Orient of France it was indispensable for every lodge to work to the Glory of the Great Architect of the Universe, to have the Three Great Lights in the lodge and to give obligation on the Volume of the Sacred Law and to forbid any political or religious discussions.⁴² Asked whether the Sacred Law was the interpretation of the Bible as given by the Roman Catholic Church, he had reiterated to the Grand Orient of France that no Grand Lodge had the competence, right nor ability to impose an interpretation of the Sacred Law.⁴³

Following that, Davidson went to London in October, 1959 to a meeting of representatives of the Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland, with representatives of the United Grand Lodge of Germany present.⁴⁴

The meeting, ostensibly called to discuss the recognition of the Grand Lodge of Germany, was held also on the request of Davidson.⁴⁵ It was Germany's turn first. Its Grand Lodge representatives were told that England had changed its mind about recognising it because the Grand Lodge of France was

40. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: GL Scotland - UGL Germany, 12 May, 1959, p. 7.

41. Ibid., Davidson - GL Scotland, 5 June, 1959, p. 8.

42. Ibid., pp. 8 - 9.

43. Ibid., p. 9.

44. Ibid., London Conference, 30 October, 1959, pp. 10 - 30.

45. Ibid., p. 11.

a member with Germany of the Luxemburg Convention.⁴⁶ The Grand Lodge of France, said Sir Ernest Cooper of the United Grand Lodge of England, the main questioner at the conference, was not "regular" as it had "renounced the Supreme Being in favour of the theory of a material governor of the universe".⁴⁷ Germany's recognition of this Grand Lodge would be an extreme embarrassment to England if it, in turn, recognised Germany. "We must not in any circumstances directly or indirectly recognise an atheistic or political body", he said.⁴⁸ The three English Grand Lodges were determined not to recognise any Grand Lodge that recognised the Grand Lodge of France.⁴⁹

Davidson went to the help of the Grand Lodge of France after Germany had been told by Cooper to conform or go unrecognised.⁵⁰ He pointed out that the Grand Lodge of France had, since its founding in 1886, always declared its belief in "the existence of a creative principle under the name of the Great Architect of the Universe".⁵¹ Cooper objected to this phrase. He said: "They make the Great Architect a mechanical being, not a Divine Being - a creative principle, a mechanical affair".⁵² Swift to deny that French Freemasons believed the Great Architect was "mechanical", Davidson was pulled up short when Cooper produced a report of the international conference of European Grand Lodges held in Brussels on 11 October, 1958 in which a representative, Dupuy, said that the Grand Lodge of France recognised the existence of a principle or supreme law which controlled the world - not a Divinity.⁵³

The Grand Lodge of France, by a majority of lodges, had decided to put the Volume of the Sacred Law back in their

46. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: London Conference, 30 October, 1959, p. 11.

47. Ibid., p. 12.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., p. 13.

51. Ibid., p. 14.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., p. 15.

temples, protested Davidson. As well they had joined the Luxemburg Convention and severed relations with the atheistic Grand Orient of France.⁵⁴ He pointed out that many French masons, when asked if they believed in God, answered they did not believe in the God of the Roman Catholic Church but in the Creator of life.⁵⁵ They were not atheists. In French the word "athé" did not mean atheist but a man not belonging in France to the Roman Catholic Church. Was this the source of all this misunderstanding, he asked?⁵⁶

Sir Ernest Cooper was unconvinced. The Grand Lodge of France believed in a creative principle but not in God, he said.⁵⁷ There was no proof they did not believe in God, answered Davidson, the conference now reaching a stalemate on this matter of interpretation.⁵⁸ But Davidson then denied the correctness of the Brussels minutes. They were "mis-written on purpose by the Grand Orient of Belgium whose Grand Master wished to return to regularity", he alleged. "Things have been put in my (Davidson's) mouth which I have not said".⁵⁹

He persevered in his defence of France. In 1945 Freemasonry was forbidden in Italy, Germany, Holland and the greater part of France, he said. A Christian form of Freemasonry existed in Scandinavia while in the free part of France existed the Grand Orient.⁶⁰

54. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: London Conference, 30 October, 1959, p. 16.

55. Ibid., p. 17.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid., 18 - 19.

59. Ibid., p. 19.

60. Ibid., p. 23.

"Unfortunately at that time the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France was ... a crypto Communist".⁶¹ But who started Freemasonry in Italy, Germany and Belgium? None but the Grand Orient of France, he said. Who helped Holland? The Grand Orient of France. "But we refused to have anybody who was communistic".⁶²

"Two years later, in 1947 or 1948 there was one Grand Lodge on the Continent of Europe outside Scandinavia ... which had maintained the old traditions". That was Holland which brought Switzerland back to regularity, he said.⁶³

The Grand Orient of France held yearly conferences of Grand Lodges all on an "atheistic and political communistic basis".⁶⁴ Something had to be started against it, and the Luxemburg Convention came into being to bring European Grand Lodges back to regularity. Members had to sever relations with irregular Grand Lodges.⁶⁵ After the war on the Continent there was an "enormous chance" that Freemasonry "would have fallen under the influence of the Grand Orient of France and under the influence of communism", said Davidson.⁶⁶

The all-important question was put several times to the Grand Master of Germany, F.A. Pinkerneil. Did he prefer to recognise the Grand Lodge of France or be recognised by the three British Grand Lodges?⁶⁷

Before the delegates adjourned for lunch, Davidson expressed what must have been in many a mind. What were the definite

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- 61. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: London Conference, 30 October, 1959, p. 23.
 - 62. Ibid.
 - 63. Ibid.
 - 64. Ibid., p. 24.
 - 65. Ibid.
 - 66. Ibid., p. 25.
 - 67. Ibid.

rules of recognition for a Grand Lodge?⁶⁸ "There is at the present time an enormous amount of confusion in world Freemasonry because Grand Lodge A cannot recognise Grand Lodge B but Grand Lodge C recognises B but does not recognise A and so on", he said.⁶⁹ The Grand Lodge of France was recognised by the Grand Lodge of Austria, Greece, Alpina (Switzerland), Holland, Manitoba, Alabama, California, Colombia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Grand Orient of Brazil, Chile, Columbia ... Ecuador (sic), Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, Panama, Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁷⁰

"The Grand Lodge of Belgium is recognised by Alabama, Cuba, and many others but not by you (England, Ireland and Scotland). Let us talk it over and let us make an end to all these very difficult questions".⁷¹

A.S. Frere, President of the Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge of England, and chairman of the meeting, replied that his remarks were irrelevant to the point at issue and the conference adjourned.⁷²

Matters came to a head in January, 1960 when England's Grand Secretary, J.W. Stubbs, formally warned Davidson that the United Grand Lodge of England takes such a serious view "of the relationship that continues to exist between the Grand Lodge of France and certain European Grand Lodges that it may become necessary to suspend relations with any of these Grand Lodges that do not produce satisfactory evidence that it does not recognise the Grand Lodge of France, permit its members to visit lodges of the Grand Lodge of France (or vice versa) or

68. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: London Conference, 30 October, 1959, p. 29.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., p. 30.

allow any form of masonic association between their members and those of the Grand Lodge of France".⁷³ If Holland continued to recognise the Grand Lodge of France, then England would withdraw its recognition of its Grand Lodge, he warned.⁷⁴

"It would mean a hard blow for the Grand East of the Netherlands when the United Grand Lodge of England would break off the friendly relations existing between these two Grand Lodges during more than two centuries", replied Davidson.⁷⁵ The matter would have to be put to the Board of Grand Lodge officers on 6 February, 1960.⁷⁶ He asked, however, why England did not require other Grand Lodges, such as those in America, to withdraw recognition of the Grand Lodge of France?⁷⁷

The Grand Lodge of France still hoped to prove itself regular and break with the Grand Orient of France and Belgium, its Grand Master, R. Dupuy, wrote to Davidson. "However the attitude of our British brothers is incomprehensible".⁷⁸

The English Grand Lodge Secretary, J.W. Stubbs, informed all his District Grand Masters in Southern Africa of the European situation.⁷⁹ "The Netherlandic masonic heads in South Africa learnt only of the impasse from their English colleagues, one of whom showed a senior Dutch mason Stubbs' letter, who in turn showed it to Col. Graham Botha, the then Dutch Deputy Grand Master in the country, who was also unaware of the situation", said Mr. Morris Levin, a Past Grand Lodge of South Africa officer in an interview with the writer.⁸⁰

73. GEN Witboek Maart, 1960: London Conference, 30 October, 1959: Stubbs - Davidson, 21 January, 1960, p. 36.

74. Ibid., p. 37.

75. Ibid., Davidson - Stubbs, 26 January, 1960, p. 37.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid., p. 38.

78. GEN GM File External Relations 1958 - 1961: Dupuy - Davidson, 28 January, 1960.

79. Interview Mr. M. Levin, past Grand Officer GLSA, 4 July, 1981.

80. Ibid.

On the same day, 5 February, 1960, Graham Botha and Davidson penned letters to each other. The Dutch Grand Master, Davidson, wrote: "I much regret a serious difference of opinion has risen between the United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand East of the Netherlands. The United Grand Lodge requires that the Grand East of the Netherlands severs the amicable relations with the Grand Lodge of France, recognised by the Grand East of the Netherlands since 1904 when the Grand Lodge of France became independent of the Supreme Council of France".⁸¹ He explained there were three Grand Lodges in France - the irregular Grand Orient, the Grand Lodge of France, not recognised by England, and the Grand Loge Nationale Francaise recognised by England and the Netherlands.⁸² England refused to recognise the Grand Lodge of France as it proclaimed the existence of a "principle créateur (creative principle) under the name of the Great Architect of the Universe. According to England a creative principle is a mechanical being, not a Divine Being".⁸³ Davidson recalled his speech to the Luxemburg Convention in 1958 when he reaffirmed that no Grand Lodge could determine the significance of a symbol "and particularly that of the expression 'Great Architect of the Universe' or of the 'Three Great Lights'. That was left to the individual".⁸⁴ England had been upset by his speech as it believed that the Grand Architect of the Universe "must be considered a personal God and the Bible his revealed Divine Will".⁸⁵ However the Netherlands considered the Grand Lodge of France to be regular as it had always worked to the glory of the Great Architect, he added.⁸⁶

The matter would be discussed by his Grand Lodge in June. He told Graham Botha: "I shall do my utmost to prevent a rupture

81. GEN GM File External Relations, 1958 - 1961: Davidson - Botha, 5 February, 1960, p. 1.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid., p. 2.

84. Ibid., pp. 2 - 3.

85. Ibid., p. 4.

86. Ibid.

with England. I further fully appreciate that, with regard to the close connections between the Netherland Constitution and the English Constitution, this rupture would be hardly bearable for South Africa and we should contemplate what could be done in such a case. Perhaps the best solution will be then to form an independent Grand Lodge for Southern Africa".⁸⁷ This was the first suggestion that a separate Grand Lodge for Southern Africa be formed - and one that was later taken up strongly by Botha's members.

In writing his letter to Davidson, Botha had no knowledge of his Grand Master's letter containing the proposal that an independent Grand Lodge be formed in South Africa of the Netherlandic lodges. Rather he was very concerned about the effects of the withdrawal of recognition of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands by the three British Grand Lodges.⁸⁸ Commenting on Stubbs' letter to the English heads in South Africa, he wrote that his members were unaware of the facts which had come to them through another channel.⁸⁹

He continued: "This letter is written on our own behalf and on behalf of the two Provincial Grand Masters responsible to nearly 5000 brethren of 92 lodges under the Netherlands Constitution in this country."⁹⁰

"Should the amity between the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland and the Grand East of the Netherlands be dissolved it will be a disaster to all concerned in this country. We submit our reasons if this happens:

"1. From time immemorial, and especially at present,

87. GEN GM File External Relations, 1958 - 1961: Davidson - Botha, 5 February, 1960, p. 5.

88. Ibid., Botha - Davidson, 5 February, 1960, p. 1.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid., p. 2..

there has existed a strong bond of masonic goodwill between the four Constitutions in Southern Africa;

"2. Our Constitution will be isolated from the other three and will be looked upon as unrecognisable. The existing amity will be dissolved;

"3. The isolation will be a grievous blow to our Brethren who have, so far, intermingled freely with the others of Sister Constitutions;

"4. Afrikaner Brethren belonging to lodges of Sister Constitutions will withdraw from these lodges. It will cause a split in the three Constitutions;

"5. There may be an attempt to foster the formation of a Grand Lodge of South Africa which has always been opposed for more than three quarters of a century. This will be disastrous to masonry in this country;

"6. Financial matters will be disorganised. Many Temples are owned jointly in many parts of the country. Chaos is likely to result.

"The decision to be or not to be at amity is not only a momentous one but calls for understanding of the other point of view", he concluded.⁹¹

England made sure none of its members would visit the suspect Grand Lodge of France. By a resolution passed at Grand Lodge on 2 March, 1960, members of the English Constitution were barred from visiting their lodges or receiving visitors ("whether a Frenchman or not").⁹²

Meanwhile Botha circularised all District Grand Masters of the English Constitution in Southern Africa reiterating the dangers to South African Freemasonry if England withdrew recognition of the Netherlands and urging them to write to

91. GEN GM File External Relations, 1958 - 1961: Botha - Davidson, 5 February, 1960, p. 2.

92. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 2 March, 1960, p. 8.

London to express their concern if a break occurred.⁹³

"We realised that, if the threat by England was carried out, over 90 lodges in South Africa and Rhodesia would be isolated. We sent an urgent communication to Holland saying that, if we were not recognised, would it be right for us to see our sister constitutions for them to take us over and issue us with provisional warrants?" Mr. Morris Levin said in an interview.⁹⁴

"The executive committee of our Provincial Grand Lodge discussed the matter and saw the possibility and the opportunity given to us to form a sovereign Grand Lodge of South Africa. This was well received though some lodges opposed it."⁹⁵

"The Deputy Grand Master, Graham Botha, the Provincial Grand Master (Transvaal excepted) Advocate Chris de Wet and the Provincial Grand Master Transvaal, Eddie Conradie, were authorised by the two Provincial Grand Lodges to go to Holland to petition it to start our own Grand Lodge in South Africa and, at the same time, to go to Ireland, Scotland and England to obtain their blessing for their own Grand Lodges in South Africa. These Grand Lodges accepted this on the condition that the District Grand Lodges in South Africa of their own constitutions would not object", said Mr. Levin.⁹⁶ By letter, in April, Botha informed Davidson of this decision and of the forthcoming delegation to Holland in June.⁹⁷

Davidson was still trying, as he put it, to make the United

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93. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence: Botha - all English DGMS, 24 February, 1960.
94. Interview with Mr. M. Levin, 4 July, 1981.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. GEN GM's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: Botha - Davidson, 13 April, 1960.

Grand Lodge of England "aware of the true situation".⁹⁸ Why was England's requirement regarding the non-recognition of the Grand Lodge of France restricted to European Grand Lodges and not include American Grand Lodges, he again asked the Grand Secretary, Stubbs.⁹⁹ In apologia he said that, though his Netherlandic Grand Lodge had recognised the Grand Lodge of France since 1904, no close relation had existed.¹⁰⁰ One of England's objections had been the Luxemburg Convention which he disclosed had been suspended in May, 1959.¹⁰¹

Representatives of the Anglo-Dutch Chapter in London worked behind the scenes for some agreement between the Grand Lodges. Davidson was informed at the beginning of April, 1960 that if he gave a "solemn assurance" that he would personally support the request of the three British Grand Lodges that Netherlands break with France at its Grand Lodge meeting in June, then England's representatives would meet him to discuss more amicable relationships.¹⁰²

The two Netherlandic Provincial Grand Lodges in South Africa asked their lodges to appoint representatives to vote for them at the vital annual meeting of the Grand East at The Hague on 18 and 19 June, 1960. The subject on the agenda was "of paramount importance to every lodge of our constitution in Southern Africa", C.H. de Wet, Provincial Grand Master in Southern Africa, told members and suggested to lodges that the Deputy Grand Master Graham Botha and the Provincial Grand Master (De Wet) be the delegates.¹⁰³ De Wet's circular did not

98. GEN GM's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: Davidson - Stubbs, 23 March, 1960.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid., Anglo-Dutch Chapter - Davidson, 5 April, 1960.

103. PGL NC (Tvl Excepted) Correspondence: Circular No.3/1960, 4 April, 1960.

specify the important matter before The Hague, which must have puzzled some masons who had not heard of the threatened break between England and the Netherlands.

The South African delegation arrived at The Hague well before the June annual meeting of their Grand East. A few days before the meeting Davidson and three of his principal officers met the South African delegates to discuss the situation. He told them that it was intended to delete the item on the agenda relating to the demand by England that Netherlands break with the Grand Lodge of France. "This meant no discussion at the annual meeting", reported Graham Botha to all English Constitution District Grand Masters in South Africa.¹⁰⁴

"The Grand Master was then asked by a delegate what he suggested to prevent disaster to the Netherlands brethren in South Africa if a breach occurred. Brother Davidson replied: "Form your own independent Grand Lodge".¹⁰⁵ On separate occasions the delegates, while at The Hague, asked the Grand Master the same question to which he gave the same reply, said Botha.¹⁰⁶

Despite Davidson's intention to delete the contentious item from the agenda of his Grand East's annual meeting on 19 June, 1960, it was given considerable airing. Beginning his annual report, he wrote: "During the past year we have had very difficult problems and these stem from international co-operation. In the first instance it has to do with the mutual acknowledgement of the Great Powers. The United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland

104. PMC 2/1/13 DGM WD EC Correspondence 1957 - 1960:
G. Botha - all DGMS English Constitution, 7 October,
1960, p. 1.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

want the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands to break relations with the Grand Loge de France. They threaten that, if that does not happen, they will sever all ties with us".¹⁰⁷

Opening the Grand Lodge itself, Davidson welcomed the Deputy Grand Master of Southern Africa, Graham Botha, and the Provincial Grand Master for South Africa, De Wet, and the Provincial Grand Master for the Transvaal, E. Conradie.¹⁰⁸

Recent events in European Freemasonry were first discussed by the Grand Lodge. Ten lodges in Belgium had broken from the Grand Orient of Belgium to form their own Grand Lodge to work "under the Great Architect of the Universe and the Great Lights", Davidson reported.¹⁰⁹ The Belgium Grand Orient, he pointed out, had attached itself to the unrecognised Grand Orient of France, causing this breakaway of the 10 lodges.¹¹⁰ His Supreme Council had, in fact, agreed to install the new Grand Lodge of Belgium over these 10 lodges in September.¹¹¹

Item XIII on the agenda was next: "The demand from the United Grand Lodge of England to break with the Grand Lodge of France".¹¹² Davidson told his Grand Lodge: "For more than two centuries we have had connections with the United Grand Lodge of England even before they were known as the United Grand Lodge and it looks to me as if we all in the Netherlands feel strongly we should continue to keep it like this".¹¹³

The two constitutions had close ties. Between 1914 and 1918 the Anglo-Dutch lodge was formed in London. "In Curaçao

107. GEN Bulletin 1960: Jaarverslag, p. 5.

108. Ibid., p. 37.

109. Ibid., pp. 48 - 49.

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid., pp. 50 - 51.

112. Ibid., p. 52.

113. Ibid.

there are close ties. In particular, in South Africa, there are numerous English lodges with whom we from the Dutch constitution give very warm friendship and brotherhood". There were funds and various charitable organisations in South Africa which belonged to the four constitutions while they also worked in the same lodge buildings.¹¹⁴

He explained that in 1877 the Grand Orient of France took an "unfortunate decision not to be under any compunction to work in honour of God and with the Three Great Lights".¹¹⁵ This led to some lodges breaking away to form the Grand Lodge of France, independent since 1904 and recognised by the Netherlands since that year. "They always, and without interruption, have worked in honour of the Great Architect of the Universe", he reiterated.¹¹⁶

"I am sorry that England thinks that this Grand Lodge of France is now not regular and wants to put it to certain sovereign Grand Powers - Netherlands, Alpina and Austria - to break their ties with them", he added.¹¹⁷

Davidson had "displayed the patience of angels". applauded a member of the Grand East, Van Eck of Lodge La Bien Aimée, in trying to convince the English brethren that the Grand Lodge of France was regular.¹¹⁸ He asked why England had never questioned Holland's recognition of the Grand Lodge of France since 1904, and why only then when the United Grand Lodge of Germany had asked to be recognised, had this question come up?¹¹⁹

He put the motion that the "Grand East of the Netherlands ... are conscious of the great importance of constantly keeping

114. GEN Bulletin 1960: Jaarverslag, p. 52.

115. Ibid., p. 53.

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid.

118. Ibid.

119. Ibid., pp. 53 - 54.

good relations with the English Grand Lodge but it must be taken into account that certain information given to the Grand East was not enough to make a definite decision and therefore have resolved to postpone Item XIII to a later date when they hope to reach a just decision". His motion was carried.¹²⁰

The two Provincial Grand Masters, De Wet and Conradie, returned to South Africa the day after the meeting and Graham Botha travelled to see the Grand Secretaries of the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland and inform them of the situation. "The formation of a Grand Lodge in South Africa by lodges of the Netherlandic Constitution as suggested by Bro. Davidson, was sympathetically received. The impression gained was that such a Grand Lodge, if regularly formed, would probably receive recognition subject to the approval of each Grand Lodge", wrote Graham Botha to all English District Grand Masters in South Africa.¹²¹

In a circular to his own lodges in South Africa, he outlined the serious situation facing them if a breach occurred between England and the Netherlands and revealed that Davidson had suggested the Netherlandic lodges should either form their own Grand Lodge or join the Scottish Constitution. However, the first alternative was preferable.¹²² Botha warned that the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands, while feeling they did not wish to sever connections with England, could not break relationships with, or withdraw recognition of, the Grand Lodge of France because that would be a breach of faith.¹²³

The next few months of 1960 were eventful for European Freemasonry. The newly formed United Grand Lodge of Germany officially broke off relations with the Grand Lodge of France

120. GEN Bulletin 1960: Jaarverslag, p. 54.

121. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: G. Botha - all DGMS EC, 7 October, 1960.

122. PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Correspondence: Circular No. 15/1960, 12 October, 1960.

123. Ibid.

and England then officially recognised Germany.¹²⁴

Davidson, visionary of a United Grand Lodge of Europe, found himself in further trouble. The Grand Lodge of Ireland told him a publication issued by the Grand Orient of Belgium had printed a letter from him expressing agreement with the minutes of the Grand Lodge meeting in 1958 attended by Grand Lodge members of the Luxemburg Convention.¹²⁵ However, he had told the meeting in London in October 1959 that the minutes of that meeting were never approved and would never be approved.¹²⁶ The Grand Lodge of Ireland took him to task, to be followed by England and Scotland.¹²⁷ With his prestige at stake, Davidson resigned as Grand Master of the Netherlands on 15 December, apologising to the British Grand Lodges for his erroneous statement.¹²⁸

But the possibility of a breach between the two constitutions - and the isolation of Dutch Freemasons in South Africa, still existed. To meet this threat, Graham Botha began making arrangements to hold special meetings of the two Provincial Grand Lodges of the Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa in February, 1961.¹²⁹ All lodges were asked to send representatives to them and to decide whether or not they approved the formation of a Grand Lodge and, on its formation, to pledge their loyalty to it.¹³⁰

Graham Botha made sure that the other constitutions both in South Africa and Britain were informed step by step of his arrangements, for official recognition was important to

124. GEN GM's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: England - Netherlands, 11 September, 1960.

125. Ibid., Ireland - Davidson, 30 November, 1960.

126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid., Davidson - England, Ireland and Scotland, 15 December, 1960.

129. PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Correspondence: Circular No. 20/1960, 28 November, 1960.

130. Ibid.

the proposed new Grand Lodge.

His eagerness brought censure on his head from the English, Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges. The Grand Secretary of England, J.W. Stubbs, wrote that the British Grand Lodges were in complete agreement that a separate Grand Lodge should be formed in the event of a rupture of relations between the Netherlands and the British Grand Lodges, but he was shocked to learn that Graham Botha was proposing in any case to hold a special general meeting in Cape Town to form a Grand Lodge.¹³¹ Stubbs suggested it might have been more appropriate for Graham Botha first to put out "feelers to the local leaders of the other three jurisdictions in an endeavour to form a United Grand Lodge composed of all masons who wished to take part in it".¹³² He suggested, anyway, that the views of other constitutions be obtained before the momentous February meeting.¹³³

The Scottish Grand Lodge told Botha that, now the British Grand Lodges would recognise Germany, "the necessity of having a Grand Lodge in Southern Africa would therefore not arise. However your letter of 1 December, (1960) clearly indicates that it is the intention of the Netherlandic Brethren to establish a Grand Lodge irrespective of the relations between the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland and the Grand East of the Netherlands".¹³⁴

The Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland took a different approach on hearing of Botha's intentions. "I really cannot help feeling that the immediate future would not be the ideal time to launch on so decisive a step as the setting up of a Grand Lodge in view of the big State

131. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Stubbs - Botha, 16 December, 1960.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid., p. 2.

134. Ibid., Scotland - Botha, 8 December, 1960.

changes that will be taking place at the same time", he wrote.¹³⁵

Later the Scottish Grand Lodge expressed relief when Botha added to the new Grand Lodge's declaration of principles that it intended to maintain the masonic status quo in South Africa and in no way affect the rights and privileges of the three constitutions operating in South Africa to open new lodges.¹³⁶

Not waiting for this advice from overseas to consult with masonic leaders in South Africa, Botha had wisely already done so, turning to the doyen of masonic leaders in South Africa, T.N. Cranstoun-Day, head of the English lodges in the Western Cape, who was an expert in masonic constitutional law and jurisprudence. Cranstoun-Day, on his request, examined and rewrote parts of the draft constitution for the new Grand Lodge.¹³⁷ Following this assistance, Botha called his Provincial Grand Lodge officers together at Bloemfontein on 12 December to discuss Davidson's resignation and, more important, the steps to be taken to form a Southern Africa Grand Lodge. With him he had Cranstoun-Day's draft declaration.¹³⁸ In January, 1961 Graham Botha circularised all heads of the other three constitutions in South Africa copies of a declaration setting out the new Grand Lodge's aims, and asking them if they objected to the formation of the proposed Grand Lodge. There was no intention of forming a United Grand Lodge at present.¹³⁹

This important declaration ensured that the establishment of "The National Grand Lodge of Southern Africa as a sovereign and

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- 135. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Ireland - Botha, 9 December, 1960.
 - 136. Ibid., Scotland - Botha, 13 January, 1961.
 - 137. Ibid., Cranstoun-Day - Botha, 6 December, 1960.
 - 138. PGL TVL NC Exco Minutes, 3 December 1948 - 2 June, 1964: Meeting, 19 January, 1961.
 - 139. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Botha - all masonic heads in South Africa, 12 January, 1961.

independent Grand Lodge by the Lodges holding Charters from the Grand East of The Netherlands in the Union of South Africa, in Rhodesia and in South West Africa, shall in no way affect the rights and privileges enjoyed by any Lodges holding Warrants from the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the Grand Lodge of Scotland, which have always shared Masonic jurisdiction on an equal basis in the said open territories: and have granted Charters for new Lodges at their discretion".¹⁴⁰

"The National Grand Lodge of Southern Africa desires that this harmonious relationship and equality of jurisdiction should continue in the future as in the past, and hereby expressly declares:

"That all the Lodges, and Royal Arch Chapters, of English, Irish or Scottish origin, shall continue to be recognised on a basis of absolute equality."¹⁴¹

"That the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the Grand Lodge of Scotland shall continue to have the right to grant Charters for new Lodges (and Royal Arch Chapters) at their discretion, until such time in the future when it might be found expedient or necessary to form a 'United Grand Lodge of Southern Africa' by the four constitutions acting by mutual agreement".¹⁴²

Two other clauses were later added in order to allow the other three constitutions to continue to open lodges in the Union of South Africa.¹⁴³ They read:

"That the existence of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa as a sovereign and independent Grand Lodge shall not preclude

140. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Cranstoun-Day - Botha, 6 January 1961 with draft declaration.

141. Ibid.

142. Ibid.

143. Ibid., Conference Bloemfontein, 6 February, 1961, p.12.

the establishment in the said open territories from time to time by the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland and Scotland and their respective District and Provincial Grand Lodges and daughter Lodges of another or other Grand Lodge or Grand Lodges with sole and sovereign Masonic jurisdiction in the open territories over the Craft and symbolic degrees within their administration.¹⁴⁴

"That, as the Rhodesias are States outside the Union of South Africa, this Grand Lodge undertakes not to grant any charters for new Lodges in those territories, and its jurisdiction is strictly confined to the seven Lodges at present existing and working in Rhodesia".¹⁴⁵

Drafters of the new Grand Lodge's principles put forward a fuller declaration, based on the English Constitution's principles to meet the requirements of regular Freemasonry.¹⁴⁶ It read:

"That the first condition of membership is a belief in the Supreme Being; that the Bible will always be open in lodges and that the Three Great Lights shall be exhibited; that masons are strictly forbidden to countenance any act which may have the tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society; that they must pay due obedience to the law of any state in which they reside;¹⁴⁷ a mason must never be remiss in the allegiance due to the Head of State of his country; he is not permitted to discuss religious or political questions".¹⁴⁸

The new Grand Lodge acknowledged "the fundamental equality of all human beings, the universal brotherhood of man and every man's duty to labour with devotion for the welfare of the community; it refused to express any opinion on questions

144. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Conference Bloemfontein, 6 February, 1961, p. 12.

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid., Amended declaration from 18 February, 1961 meeting.

147. Ibid., p. 1.

148. Ibid.

of foreign or domestic state policy either at home or abroad and would stand aloof from political affairs. It refused to have anything to do with bodies styling themselves Freemasons which do not adhere to these basic principles but would enter into amity with any Grand Lodge which professes these principles".¹⁴⁹

Calling special meetings to discuss the new Grand Lodge, the 94 Netherlandic lodges in Southern Africa had been almost unanimous in their support for the scheme. All except one in the Transvaal had voted in favour.¹⁵⁰ That lodge, Lodge Eendracht Maakt Macht in Johannesburg, and the seven in Rhodesia, decided to remain under the Netherlandic jurisdiction.¹⁵¹

Reaction was the same in the rest of South Africa. In Cape Town, for instance, the oldest lodge in the country, De Goede Hoop, voted 20 for and none against the proposal and appointed C.W. Bamford as its representative to the proposed "National Convention" of Netherland lodges in Cape Town on 18 February, 1961.¹⁵²

Botha had called the February meeting at short notice, no doubt to move ahead of the irregularly-formed S.A. Order of Freemasons which was considering forming a Grand Lodge of its own.¹⁵³ He could not obviously wait for the Grand East of the Netherlands to meet in June, 1961 to discuss the international impasse again and perhaps, then, find his lodges were cut off from other constitutions in South Africa.¹⁵⁴

149. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Amended declaration from 18 February, 1961 meeting, p. 2.

150. Ibid., DGM Transvaal - DGM WD, 16 November, 1960.

151. PMC DGL WD EC Report: Meeting, 29 April, 1968, p. 15.

152. CA Unlisted Temp. No.14, De Goede Hoop Minutes June 1950 - December, 1961: Meeting, 4 January, 1961.

153. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Cranstoun-Day - Folly, 18 November, 1960.

154. Ibid.

Adding impetus to his eagerness to establish a Grand Lodge for South Africa was the impending declaration of a Republic of South Africa. "They are determined to go ahead and get their house in order before the coming of the Republic", Cranstoun-Day wrote in January, 1961.¹⁵⁵

Masonic leaders had planned to hold one of their regular interconstitutional meetings in March 1961 but, with this sense of urgency in the air, Cranstoun-Day decided to call the conference on 6 February at Bloemfontein. "I regret that the notice is so short but events have moved with such rapidity", he wrote to all the English, Irish and Scottish leaders in South Africa.¹⁵⁶ It had become necessary to hold a joint conference as the Netherlandic Constitution were forming a Grand Lodge for themselves only and also "to discuss other matters consequent on the coming of the Republic".¹⁵⁷ It was essential there be mutual agreement on the policy adopted by the Grand Lodges overseas towards the new Grand Lodge before the Netherlandic meeting on 18 February, he pointed out.¹⁵⁸

The Bloemfontein conference on 6 February was a testing time for Graham Botha. In the chair, Cranstoun-Day, before some 30 masonic leaders, put two leading questions to him.¹⁵⁹

"Are you severing your ties with the Grand East of the Netherlands so far as jurisdiction and allegiance are concerned - and why?"

"What is the reason for the precipitate action you have taken in this matter? And why could it not have been postponed until

155. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Cranstoun-Day - James, 19 January, 1961.

156. Ibid., Cranstoun-Day - all masonic heads, 9 January, 1961.

157. Ibid.

158. Ibid.

159. Ibid., Report Bloemfontein Conference, 6 February, 1961, p. 5.

after June to see what happens regarding the question at issue between the United Kingdom Grand Lodge and the Grand East of the Netherlands?".¹⁶⁰

Botha and his colleagues stated it was their intention to sever connections with the Grand East of the Netherlands and reported on their delegates' recent visit to Holland.¹⁶¹ Their decision to establish their own Grand Lodge stemmed from the fear that, if at the next annual meeting of the Grand East of the Netherlands, they found themselves not in amity with the British Grand Lodges, the local Netherlandic Freemasons would be cut off here.¹⁶²

"Also the fact that, in Holland - under the Netherlands Constitution - there is no reference in the obligations to the Great Architect nor to God, would not be approved here in South Africa whose ritual conforms in that respect with the sister constitutions", they said.¹⁶³

There was some discussion about the name of the new Grand Lodge and eventually the word "National" was dropped and the agreed amended name read "The Grand Lodge of Southern Africa".¹⁶⁴

Botha denied his new Grand Lodge would claim sovereign jurisdiction over Rhodesia other than over the present Dutch lodges there. He gave the assurance he would not charter new lodges there either.¹⁶⁵

After Botha and his colleagues retired from the meeting, the conference considered and approved a resolution from Cranstoun-Day

160. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Report Bloemfontein Conference, 6 February, 1961, p. 5.

161. Ibid.

162. Ibid.

163. Ibid., p. 6.

164. Ibid.

165. Ibid.

for sending on to their respective Grand Lodges in England, Ireland and Scotland.¹⁶⁶ It read:

"We, the District and Provincial Grand Masters, having jurisdiction in the Union of South Africa, South West Africa and Rhodesia under the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the Grand Lodge of Scotland - having heard and considered the statements made, and the assurances given by R.W. Brother Col. C. Graham Botha - the Deputy Grand Master for the Netherlands in Southern Africa - and his Executive Officers, are of the opinion:

"That the proposed 'Grand Lodge of Southern Africa of Antient Free and Accepted Masons' fully accepts the fundamental Principles of the Craft; and is being established by the Netherlandic Lodges in conformity with the Basic Principles for Recognition as set out by our respective Grand Lodges;

"That the 'Declaration' submitted by the Netherlandic representatives securing to our respective Grand Lodges all the rights and discretionary power hitherto enjoyed by them in exercising equal Masonic jurisdiction in Southern Africa, will, when embodied in the Constitution of the proposed 'Grand Lodge', fully protect our present and future interests".¹⁶⁷

Twelve days later - on 18 February, 1961 - the Netherlandic "National Convention" was held in De Goede Hoop temple attended by 150, including the representatives of 90 lodges.¹⁶⁸ Now assured of recognition by the three constitutions in South Africa, Botha could attend this convention with

166. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Report Bloemfontein Conference, 6 February, 1961, p. 7.

167. Ibid.

168. PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Correspondence: Circular No. 5/1961, 5 April, 1961, p. 2.

confidence. It resolved to form a Grand Lodge to be known as the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa.¹⁶⁹ The amended declaration was adopted and the draft resolution accepted in principle. Botha was elected Grand Master, C.H. de Wet appointed Deputy Grand Master, and E. Conradie Assistant Grand Master.¹⁷⁰

In his letter to Cranstoun-Day describing the Convention, Botha wrote: "This gives an outline of a momentous, historic and unique masonic meeting in Southern Africa", and thanked him for his advice and guidance, informing him he was writing to the overseas Grand Lodges about the Convention and seeking recognition.¹⁷¹

Botha was still in a hurry. The inaugural meeting of the new Grand Lodge was planned for 22 April, 1961, yet the British Grand Lodges had not had time to meet to consider recognition of it. London agreed, on Cranstoun-Day's request, that intervisitation should be permitted between English lodges and those of the new Grand Lodge pending recognition when the United Grand Lodge of England met in June that year.¹⁷²

Cranstoun-Day represented the English Grand Master, the Earl of Scarborough, at the inaugural meeting in April, 1961 of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in Cape Town, attended by some 750 masons of all constitutions.¹⁷³

It was "the greatest event that has occurred in the masonic history of South Africa", Cranstoun-Day told his District Grand Lodge in May of the same eventful year.¹⁷⁴

"Under Dutch rule the Grand East of the Netherlands brought

169. PGL (Tvl Excepted) NC Correspondence: Circular No. 5/1961, 5 April, 1961, p. 2.

170. Ibid.

171. PMC 2/1/15 File GLSA: Botha - Cranstoun-Day, 24 February, 1961.

172. Ibid., England - all DGMs, 22 March, 1961.

173. Ibid., Cranstoun-Day - England, 24 April, 1961.

174. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 6 May, 1961, p. 20.

Freemasonry to the Cape in 1772, and under British rule the Grand Lodge of England followed in 1801; Scotland in 1860 and Ireland some 40 years later. Southern Africa has therefore always been regarded as being what is called 'an Open territory', in which the four Constitutions have exercised Masonic jurisdiction on terms of full equality', he said.¹⁷⁵ "In past years, notably in 1875, 1876 and 1892, joint meetings have been held to discuss the formation of a United Grand Lodge, but these attempts failed, mainly on the grounds of great differences in constitutional law, and ritual, and on the allocation of trust funds for education and benevolence. The oldest Netherlandic and English lodges were also opposed to the proposals.

"Now, nearly 70 years later, the 'Winds of Change' we hear so much about, and which seem to be ubiquitous, have stirred even the conservatism of the oldest Masonic family in South Africa", he added.¹⁷⁶

He told of the 18 February meeting when the Dutch lodges agreed to constitute themselves as the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa and elected Botha as Grand Master.¹⁷⁷ At the Bloemfontein conference of all masonic heads on 6 February he revealed it took less than 1½ hours for masonic heads to agree to advise the British Grand Lodges to grant recognition to the new Grand Lodge.¹⁷⁸

He spelt out that founders of the new Grand Lodge had expressly wished to emphasise that the status quo would be maintained and the new Grand Lodge would not claim "any superior authority or precedence or exclusive territorial

175. PMD DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 6 May, 1961, p. 21.

176. Ibid.

177. Ibid.

178. Ibid., p. 22.

jurisdiction in Southern Africa which will remain an open territory".¹⁷⁹

Recognition by the three British Grand Lodges took some months. At its 14 June, 1961 meeting, the United Grand Lodge of England recognised the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, now a "Foreign Grand Lodge".¹⁸⁰ The Deputy Grand Registrar, R.W. Goff, Q.C. pointed out to Grand Lodge that there were 246 lodges in South Africa on the roll of England. "Our rights in respect of those have been preserved and there is nothing to prevent us giving warrants for new lodges in South Africa should we see fit to do so".¹⁸¹ "The sovereign rights of the three jurisdictions have been fully recognised and preserved and the new Grand Lodge has engaged itself not to extend beyond the boundaries of the Union further than to absorb any Netherlandic lodges in Rhodesia which may wish to join it".¹⁸²

Its basic principles set out in the declaration were in accordance with England's requirements, he added.¹⁸³ In June, 1961, the new Grand Master of the Netherlands, M. ten Cate, informed the Grand Lodge of France that the Netherlands no longer recognised it.¹⁸⁴ The threat of a breach between England and the Netherlands was thus ended and the basic cause for the establishment of a Grand Lodge for Southern Africa removed. But, by June, Botha and his Grand Lodge of Southern Africa were very active. At the birth of the new Grand Lodge, 4291 members from 88 lodges were on the rolls - 1497 in the Transvaal, 1899 in the Southern Division and 895 in the Central Division.¹⁸⁵ By 1978 it had 128 lodges on its register with a membership of 4456, with a Division in Natal added.¹⁸⁶

179.. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 6 May, 1961, p. 22.

180. FMH UGLE Reports: Meeting, 14 June, 1961, p. 115.

181. Ibid.

182. Ibid., p. 116.

183. Ibid.

184. GEN GM's File External Relations 1958 - 1961: GM - GL France, 23 June, 1961.

185. GLSA Reports: Returns, 1964.

186. GLSA Reports: Returns, 1978.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has attempted to show the effect of political changes, economic trends and social attitudes on Freemasonry in South Africa with particular reference to the periodical appearances of a movement to establish a united grand lodge of all constitutions.

Both parts of this thesis are contained to some extent in the words of the then District Grand Secretary of the English Natal lodges, C.W.P. Douglas-de-Fenzi, who wrote in 1908: "Conditions existing in any community must necessarily be in some measure reflected in a society whose membership constitutes a part of that community".¹ Douglas-de-Fenzi implies that outside or non-masonic events must necessarily bring changes within the masonic society. His hypothesis of historical circumstance, of cause and effect, is amply illustrated in this history of Freemasonry in South Africa from 1772 to 1961. Wars, depressions, booms, political upheavals changed the body politic - and the masonic society. Masonic lodges proliferated in times of economic expansion and declined during economic downturns. Lodges closed down in times of war and fresh ones opened up in the euphoria of postwar peace.

But Douglas-de-Fenzi's hypothesis is not completely acceptable. He ignores the effects on the masonic society of the ambitions, pride and enthusiasm, or the conservatism, weakness and dilatoriness of masonic leaders in South Africa and in the Grand Lodges in Europe. This is first shown in the short first existence of the first lodge in South Africa - De Goede Hoop - formed in 1772 which went into recess in 1781 when its first master, Abraham Chiron, succumbed to church opposition. It was rescuscitated in 1794. Of sterner stuff were his successors such as Sir John Truter who, being of higher rank than Chiron within the Dutch East India Company hierarchy, were ensured of protection both from church and pulpit.

1. NEA DGL Natal EC Reports: Meeting, 30 March, 1908, p. 18.

The movement was given the official seal of approval by the arrival of the Commissary-General Jacob Abraham de Mist to take over the Cape in 1803 on behalf of the Batavian Republic. Deputy Grand Master in Holland, De Mist appointed Truter as Deputy Grand Master for South Africa and to a leading post on the Governor's Council. During the second British occupation (1806 - 1814) Truter, later Chief Justice of the Cape Colony from 1815, was able to ensure British protection for the Craft and more particularly so when he was appointed to head the English lodges as Provincial Grand Master for South Africa (1826 - 1833).

Sir Christoffel Brand, Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic Constitution (1847 - 1874), had perhaps the greatest influence on the expansion of Freemasonry during the 1860s. While English Freemasonry established itself along the eastern coast and to Natal in the 1850s and 1860s primarily as a result of commercial expansion, Brand, singly through his missionary tours into the interior as far as Pretoria, even at 73 years of age, set up Netherlandic lodges wherever he went, consolidating his constitution for a time as the leading one in South Africa. His strong influence on Freemasonry was in contrast to the vacillating attitude at the time of Sir Richard Southey, Provincial Grand Master for South Africa for the English Constitution (1863 - 1879). Through his neglect, the separatist masonic element in the Eastern Province and Griqualand West broke away to form their own districts in 1876 and Natal in 1883.

The centrifugal effect on the Craft of the discovery of diamonds and the exploitation of the goldfields, leading to the opening of new lodges, mainly English and Scottish, in Griqualand West and in the South African Republic, has been recorded in earlier chapters. Lodges on the coast were depleted as masons left to seek their fortunes. English Transvaal lodges eventually felt their importance to press for and win a separate district Grand Lodge in 1895, while those around

Kimberley obtained district status in 1896. The Dutch lodges did not divide until 1906 when the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Transvaal was formed, leaving the rest of the lodges under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Lodge (Transvaal excepted) ruled from Cape Town.

The lack of real growth in the Netherlandic Constitution, reaching its low water mark in the 1880s, could again be attributed to the absence of strong leadership following the death of Brand in 1875. Deputy Grand Masters J.H. Hofmeyr (1874 - 1892), Rev. D.P. Faure (1893 - 1897) and C.E. Lewis (1897 - 1903) were not cast in the same missionary mould as Brand while the two Wars of Independence affected Netherlandic lodges more seriously than English lodges.

Hofmeyr, as Master of the Supreme Court, eventually found his official duties left him little time to foster Dutch Freemasonry. Faure was involved in doctrinal disputes which occasioned a severe rift within his constitution. Lewis, in his controversy with the Supreme Government in the Netherlands over the Mansfield case, which led to his eventual resignation, brought into the open South African dissatisfaction with rule from Holland.

Moves to closer union in South Africa with the establishment of British supremacy after the Treaty of Vereeniging in 1902, were welcomed enthusiastically by English and Scottish Freemasons who agitated again for a united Grand Lodge for South Africa. Racked by internal disputes, Dutch lodges, however, were too concerned about their allegiance to their Netherlands leaders who were issuing contentious decrees inimical to their continued operations in South Africa.

It is true they could boast of distinguished members - three Presidents of the Orange Free State Republic, M.W. Pretorius who was also President of the South African Republic, Sir John Brand and F.W. Reitz; President T.F. Burgers of the S.A. Republic; General Louis Botha and the Chairman of the

National Convention, Sir Henry de Villiers. But these worthy masons did not cement their unity. Dutch masons eventually had the guidance from 1903 of a strong leader, Deputy Grand Master, C.C. Silberbauer who ruled until 1944. Their new confidence, however, was weakened by internal political conflict over South Africa's entry into the first world war and the 1914 - 1915 Rebellion. During this war and in the postwar peace it was the turn of the English, Irish and Scottish masons to assert their dominance.

Between the two world wars, political events - particularly the coalition of the South Africa Party and the National Party in 1933, brought subtle changes in the Craft. Masonic leaders saw the coalition as a welding of the two groups - Afrikaans and English - into one and a need to make over the Craft into a South African-orientated movement. C.C. Silberbauer emerged as the innovator, introducing an Afrikaans ritual for lodges where they wished it while, in contrast, the United Grand Lodge of England ruled against the use of Afrikaans. In the same period - the early 1930s, Silberbauer lost many members as a result of a concerted campaign by the D.R. Church against the Craft. His constitution survived this storm, but a further blow came in 1940 when he found himself the senior Dutch mason in the world - and autonomous ruler of Dutch Freemasonry in South Africa - with the eradication by the Nazis of the Supreme Government in the Netherlands. A lesser man might have failed. During those war years, though in ill-health, Silberbauer continued to maintain his jurisdiction. Deeply religious in his views, he constantly called on Freemasons to exercise the masonic principles of brotherly love and charity to help win the peace. He was convinced that a United Grand Lodge for South Africa was inevitable, but his position as the senior mason in South Africa - and his views of unity - were challenged by the emerging personality of the District Grand Master of the Western Division of the English Constitution, T.N. Cranstoun-Day (1927 - 1966), as forthright an individual as Sir Christoffel Brand. Small in stature, determined as a

bulldog, Cranstoun-Day was an Anglophile, emphatic that ties with Britain should not be broken. He admitted he could not speak Afrikaans and advocated that Afrikaans-speaking masons, if they wished to use Afrikaans in lodge ritual, should join the Netherlandic Constitution.

Cranstoun-Day, because of his knowledge of masonic jurisprudence and constitutional law, became the consultant and confidante of masonic leaders in South Africa from the war years until his resignation in 1966 and his death the next year, having ruled over English Freemasonry in the Cape for 39 years. He was responsible for the drafting of the reply to the Report of the D.R.C. Synodical Commission in 1942 after Silberbauer had given way to Cranstoun-Day's more learned arguments against the church's polemics.

He was the final authority consulted by the four constitutions in South Africa on all contentious matters including further church attacks during the succeeding years. He became the adviser and guide to constitutional heads in the Transvaal about the formation of the illegal S.A. Order of Freemasons in 1951, advised them not to recognise it and ensured its demise. As chairman of the biennial conferences of the four constitutions he made sure delegates resolved that the "time was not ripe" for the creation of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa. He did, however, guide and advise his close friend, Col. G. Graham Botha, then Deputy Grand Master of the Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa, on his very precarious way to an independent Grand Lodge of South Africa in 1961.

To Cranstoun-Day, the new Grand Lodge of Southern Africa would provide a home for Afrikaans-speaking masons. The purity of the English language masonic rituals practised in the English, Irish and Scottish Constitutions must not be disturbed, he reflected many times in his voluminous writings, most of which are preserved. His support for a

separate Grand Lodge was related to his desire to ensure the continuing independence of English, Scottish and Irish Freemasonry in South Africa and the maintenance of traditional links with their Grand Lodge overseas. His drafting of the declaration of principles for the new Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, which was later accepted by Botha, ensured that independence.

Graham Botha, grateful that Cranstoun-Day was there to advise him, must have also been thankful for the actions of C.M.R. Davidson, his erstwhile Grand Master in the Netherlands. Hopeful for a reunited European masonic organisation where "regular" Grand Lodges could meet "irregular", Davidson in his campaign underestimated the influence of the mother Grand Lodge, the United Grand Lodge of England, and failed to appreciate that conservative England would not give way on the principles for recognition of a Grand Lodge. He was forced into a difficult position - either withdraw recognition of the "irregular" Grand Lodge of France or lose the recognition of the three British Grand Lodges. The latter event eventually would isolate Dutch Freemasons in South Africa from their English, Irish and Scottish colleagues. Asked by Graham Botha and his colleagues what they should do if that happened, Davidson answered: "Form your own Grand Lodge".

Davidson, caught up in his European Grand Lodge manoeuvring and its repercussions, obviously had little thought for his South African lodges. His advice to Graham Botha fortuitously coincided with the pro-Republican feeling in South Africa and was seen as another opportunity to break ties with overseas, if not with Britain, and establish an independent masonic authority.

Trapped by his own words, Davidson was discredited and resigned. By June of 1961 the Netherlands Grand East had followed England's request and withdrawn its recognition of the Grand Lodge of France, thereby removing the basic cause

for the formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa. But it was too late. Botha had been quick to seize his opportunity and the new Grand Lodge was already inaugurated by that month.

The fundamental causes for the formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa could stem therefore from the 1959-1960 confrontation between the altruistic Davidson and the unbending British Grand Lodges. Courageous Graham Botha, under the wise guidance of Cranstoun-Day, capitalised on the overseas argument.

SINCE 1961

An independent - though not fully sovereign - Grand Lodge has been established in South Africa since 1961. To some masons, it is seen as a necessary step towards a united Grand Lodge of South Africa; to others it is regarded as a step backwards.

Leaders of the new Grand Lodge were at first not eager to commit themselves to schemes for a united Grand Lodge of South Africa. Before the biennial meeting of all constitutions held at Johannesburg in September, 1966 the Assistant Grand Master E. Conradie of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, wrote to his Deputy Grand Master, C. de Wet, about the item on the agenda referring to a United Grand Lodge for South Africa.² "We should proceed with the greatest caution. Much can be said for the principle of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa but, if it means that the smaller constitutions like our own and the Irish have once again to be pushed into the background and if they are to be dominated by the two larger constitutions (English and Scottish), if, in short, we have to sacrifice all our

2. GLSA File Biennial Meetings of Sister Constitutions, 4 June, 1966 - 2 August, 1966: Conradie - De Wet, 13 July, 1966.

customs, usages and even our ritual, then I personally will not go along.³

"If a United Grand Lodge means we are to be demoted once again to the position of the Cinderella of Freemasonry in South Africa then I would prefer it if the other constitutions went it alone and left us to do the same".⁴

The conference, however, rejected any suggestion that the time was ripe for a United Grand Lodge for South Africa, but not until after long debate.⁵

At the meeting the Irish heads of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State lodges said their lodges were in favour of any move which would set up an independent sovereign Grand Lodge for the whole of Masonry within the Republic which was now fully established as an independent country.⁶ Those organisations opposed to Freemasonry used the present English, Irish and Scottish connections as proof of a movement emanating from outside the borders of South Africa. A United Grand Lodge would have to be by the majority and will of all masons in South Africa while the present Grand Lodge of Southern Africa would have to disappear, said W.D. Adendorff, Provincial Grand Master of the Irish lodges in the north.⁷

While the Natal, Rhodesian and Transvaal leaders opposed any change, there was some support from those representing the Free State and Northern Cape lodges.⁸ R.H. Bolt, District Grand Master of the English lodges in the Free State, said

3. GLSA File Biennial Meetings of Sister Constitutions, 4 June, 1966 - 2 August, 1966: Conradie - De Wet, 13 July, 1966.

4. Ibid.

5. PMC 2/2/1 DGM Correspondence, Interconstitutional Conferences 1966 - 1978: Conference, 3 September, 1966, p.1.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

he knew the small towns were looking forward to having a United Grand Lodge. This was especially true amongst the Afrikaans-speaking brethren.⁹

Cranstoun-Day posed two questions to the Conference. "Is such a step advisable?" "Is such a step desirable?" (of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa).¹⁰ How could general agreement be brought about? The English, Irish and Scottish lodges could not join the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa because of the different laws and regulations while the "Grand Lodge of Southern Africa would certainly not consent to its own dissolution in order to form a new Grand Lodge in which it would be absorbed and lose the independent position it had achieved".¹¹ It was possible some lodges might form a United Grand Lodge of their own in which case there would be two Grand Lodges in South Africa and a fifth Constitution in South Africa.¹² If that happened how would the accumulated joint benevolent and general funds be distributed and how would the jointly-held property be divided? In what way would a Grand Master be elected, he asked and was there to be a new ritual?¹³

Capping this massive weight of argument against a United Grand Lodge, Cranstoun-Day called for clear answers to these questions, adding "There must be far more solid reasons (for a United Grand Lodge) than the irresponsible vapourings of after-dinner speakers".¹⁴

Two years later masonic leaders met in Johannesburg without

9. PMC 2/2/1 DGM Correspondence Interconstitutional Conferences 1966 - 1978: Conference, 3 September, 1966,p.2.

10. Ibid., Annexure, p. 1.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., pp. 1 - 2.

14. Ibid., p. 2.

the redoubtable presence of Cranstoun-Day who had resigned after nearly 40 years in charge of the English lodges in the Western Division of the Cape and died on 13 September, 1967.¹⁵ His successor was R. Hooker who attended the biennial conference to agree with the others that the time was still not ripe for forming a United Grand Lodge.¹⁶ The question was dropped from later inter-constitutional conferences.¹⁷ Other more pressing matters had arisen.

The gravest difficulty facing the new Grand Lodge of Southern Africa since 1961 was the question of its sovereignty. Was it to be completely sovereign in South Africa, alone to have the right to form new lodges? Its declaration, adopted on 18 February, 1961 and agreed by all constitutions, had specifically maintained the status quo whereby the other three constitutions continued with the right to open new lodges within the borders of the Republic. But, in 1977, the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa amended this declaration and the other three Grand Lodges were approached for their approval.¹⁸

The amended Appendix 10(b) of the proposed declaration was the contentious point. It suggested that the three Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland "surrender their right to warrant new lodges within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, provided always that rights of lodges not adhering to the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa shall be fully safeguarded".¹⁹ It further suggested that Appendix 10(a) reading: "That all lodges and Royal Arch

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15. PMC DGM WD EC Reports: Meeting, 15 July, 1967, p. 53.
 16. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conferences 1966 - 1978: Conference, 14 September, 1968, p. 4.
 17. Ibid., Conferences 1970 - 1976.
 18. Ibid., GLSA's proposed declaration, 1977; NSA DGL Natal SC Reports: Meeting, 25 February, 1977, p. 8.
 19. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conferences 1966 - 1978: GLSA's proposed declaration 1977, p. 3.

Chapters of English, Irish and Scottish origin shall continue to be recognised on a basis of absolute equality" be amended by deletion of the words "on a basis of absolute equality" thus putting these lodges on an inferior status to those of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa.²⁰

Understandably, the other constitutions objected. "We are totally opposed to any alteration in the original declaration", said the Scottish District Grand Master in Natal, G.H. Christian.²¹ His District and that of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State advised the Grand Lodge of Scotland of their firm opposition to these amendments.²²

The six English District Grand Masters in South Africa met in Cape Town in August, 1977 to discuss the amendments and declared they too were "unanimously agreed not to deviate from the original declaration upon which the formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa was constituted in 1961 and that we recommend the rejection of the proposed new declaration".²³

"In 1961 the Brethren seeking to form the Southern Africa Constitution were very grateful for the solution to their problems resulting from the goodwill and assistance of the other Constitutions, yet now they desire to arrogate themselves the right to limit the rightful aspirations and development of the other Constitutions in South Africa in the Craft degrees", T. Murray Simpson, head of the Scottish lodges in the Western Province, informed Scotland.²⁴

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20. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional conferences 1966 - 1978: GLSA's proposed declaration, 1977, p. 3.
 21. NSA DGL Natal SC Report: Meeting, 25 February, 1977, p. 8.
 22. Ibid., Meeting, 9 August, 1977, p. 4: Joint memo to Scotland.
 23. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conferences: Meeting English DGMs, 6 August, 1977.
 24. Ibid., Simpson - Scotland, 18 July, 1977.

"The fact that the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa is not a body formed by the spontaneous desire of Freemasons in South Africa to form a Grand Lodge but arose purely as a compromise in solving a potential problem when there was a strong possibility of the Grand Lodge of England withdrawing recognition from the Grand East of the Netherlands, makes them entirely unrepresentative of South African masonic opinion. Even now they are a comparatively small minority of about 20 per cent of the lodges in South Africa in the Craft degrees", he added.²⁵

Out of the 577 lodges working in South Africa in 1977, 264 were under the United Grand Lodge of England, 145 under Scotland, 54 under Ireland and 114 under the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa.²⁶

In accordance with masonic protocol, the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa communicated directly to other Grand Lodges and not with the Provincial or district representatives of other constitutions based in South Africa. There was no concordat about consulting other constitutions before warranting new lodges in South Africa, the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa wrote to London in 1976.²⁷ It felt no "foreign" constitutions should charter lodges in this country.²⁸ It obviously too suggested privately to London that the time was ripe for it to absorb the other constitutions and become a United Grand Lodge for South Africa.

Reacting to this claim, the District Grand Master of the English Western Division lodges, Finlay McIntyre, told his district in April, 1978: "It appears that certain statements

25. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conferences: Simpson - Scotland, 18 July, 1977.

26. DGL ED EC Report: Meeting, 16 September, 1977, p. 15.

27. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conferences 1966 - 1978: GLSA - UGLE, 23 November, 1976, p. 1.

28. Ibid., p. 2.



The District Grand Master R.W.Brother, Finlay McIntyre (1971 - 1980) of the Western Division of the English Constitution, supported by flagbearers, walks in procession at the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of Pinelands Masonic Centre on 24 April, 1972.



Visit of His Royal Highness, Prince George, Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England (centre), to Cape Town in February, 1934.

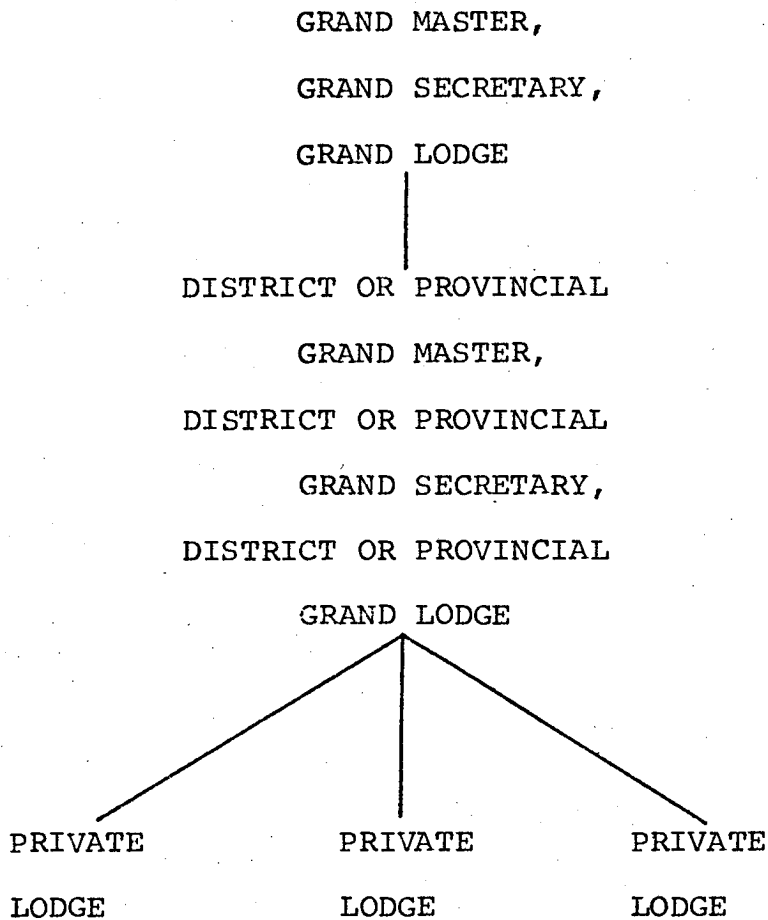
(Courtesy: Cay's Photo Service)

ORGANISATIONAL DIAGRAM

OF MODEL FREEMASON'S GRAND LODGE

EMBRACING THE THREE CRAFT DEGREES -

ENTERED APPRENTICE, FELLOW CRAFT AND MASTER MASON



THIS MODEL IS USED SIMILARLY IN THE SO-CALLED
'SIDE' OR 'HIGH' DEGREES, THOUGH WITH DIFFERENT
TITLES

and rumours have been circulating on the possibility of unification of the four Constitutions in the Republic, under the banner of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa.²⁹

"It is probable that many of you have never even heard of the Conference held at Bloemfontein in 1961. Just prior to this date, there had arisen a difference of opinion between the United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand East of the Netherlands.³⁰

"It was decided at this Conference that a Grand Lodge in South Africa be formed. This had to be with the assistance and approval of these other Constitutions who, after some friendly discussion, recommended to their Grand Lodges that recognition be accorded to the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa.³¹

"A Declaration was therefore drawn up by the proposed new Grand Lodge, one of the clauses being that the other three Constitutions retain the right to constitute new Lodges and Chapters whenever they felt inclined so to do. This declaration was agreed to and became an integral part of the agreement signed by all parties.³²

"Certain correspondence has now been released by the United Grand Lodge of England (with the permission of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa which inaugurated the issue), wherein the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa has now raised objections to this clause.

"The reply by our Grand Lodge has been, and still is, that no decision by the M.W. Grand Master and advisors will be made, unless and until the opinion of the local District Grand

29. PMC DGL WD EC Report: Meeting, 29 April, 1978, p. 11.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., p. 12.

Masters has been obtained and considered".³³

He recalled that in 1977 the six District Grand Masters in South Africa meeting in Port Elizabeth decided to recommend the rejection of the contentious clause but he pointed out that, if a lodge wished to transfer to the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, it might do, provided two-thirds of members agreed.³⁴

The Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in May 1978 restated its position in a circular to all its lodges to reply to "derogatory and misconstrued statements" about its status which it claimed had been circulated after the other three constitutions in South Africa had refused to accept its claim to sole right to charter lodges.³⁵

"There are clear indications that the very close and harmonious relationship which has for many years existed between the brethren of the four constitutions is becoming somewhat strained which is attributable to the doubt and suspicion which has arisen in the minds of certain brethren in regard to the honourable intention of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in consequence of these misstatements", the circular read.³⁶

It claimed that at a meeting of district and provincial Grand Masters and their deputies of the four constitutions in Johannesburg on 11 September, 1976 "it was suggested by implication that the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa was nothing more than a superior provincial or district Grand Lodge".³⁷

33. PMC DGL WD EC Report: Meeting, 29 April, 1978, p. 12.

34. Ibid., p. 13.

35. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conference: GLSA Circular, 16 May, 1978, p. 2.

36. Ibid., p. 1.

37. Ibid., p. 2.

Repudiating this, it added: "The Grand Lodge of Southern Africa is an autonomous, independent and, more important, the only sovereign Grand Lodge in South Africa. It is recognised as such throughout the masonic world".³⁸ "The Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa ranks in style, station and authority equal to all other Grand Masters ... on the other hand district and provincial Grand Masters of the sister constitutions are only heads of subordinate formations with a restrictive status and jurisdiction pertaining to their respective district or province".³⁹

"At no time has the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa, since its inception, ever entered into any concordat to consult with any constitution before the establishment of a new lodge nor to obtain any permission therefore", the circular added.⁴⁰

The concordat between the United Grand Lodge of England, Ireland and Scotland signed in 1905, and amended in 1964, prohibiting any "foreign" Grand Lodge from chartering a lodge in the territory of another sovereign Grand Lodge should be applied in South Africa: "In other words the proposal is that in future all new lodges should be chartered only by the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa".⁴¹ All rights and privileges of existing lodges would be maintained.⁴²

Despite this proposal being mooted some time ago, no reply had been received (from the other constitutions) but instead certain statements had been made "casting a reflection on the intentions of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa and inferring that its motives are completely in conflict with what is outlined above", it added.⁴³

38. PMC 2/2/1 Inter-constitutional Conferences: GLSA Circular, 16 May, 1978, p. 2.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid., p. 3.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

At the time of writing, this exclusive right by the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa to open new lodges has not yet been agreed by the other three Grand Lodges. The United Grand Lodge of England formally informed the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in 1978 that it would not agree to any alteration to the 1961 Agreement following recommendations from its District Grand Masters in South Africa that they would not accept any change.⁴⁴

Because of the decision of the seven Netherlandic lodges in Rhodesia to remain under control of the Netherlands, the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa's jurisdiction no longer extended outside the borders of S. Africa and it changed its name in 1981, with the consent of the other Grand Lodges represented in South Africa, to the "Grand Lodge of South Africa", making it in name, if nothing else, a national Grand Lodge.⁴⁵

The new Grand Lodge of South Africa early set out to encourage the use of both official languages. In August, 1964 its annual meeting heard that its membership was 4291 compared to 4155 the year before.⁴⁶ The Southern Division had 1899 members in 1964, the Transvaal 1497, the Central Division including the Orange Free State and Natal 895.⁴⁷ The Southern Division boasted 31 lodges using English and 6 Afrikaans, the Transvaal 23 using English and 14 Afrikaans and the Central Division 15 English and 5 Afrikaans.⁴⁸

44. PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 28 April, 1978, p. 12.

45. GLS: Grand Committee meeting, 18 June, 1981, p. 61.

46. GLSA GL Minutes 18 February, 1961 - 20 August, 1966: Meetings, 22 August, 1964 and 31 August, 1963.

47. Ibid., Meeting 22 August, 1964.

48. Ibid.

It went further on 19 November, 1977 when, after six years of negotiation, it admitted 40 Coloured Freemasons, members of local lodges belonging to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, which was not in amity with the British Grand Lodges. They were mainly professional men. They had agreed to cut all connections with their Grand Lodge and join the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa. They were also able to visit lodges of other constitutions.⁴⁹ The acceptance of the Coloured members was first approved by the Department of Community Development.⁵⁰

Senior officials of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa have laboured to win recognition from other Grand Lodges in the world. By 1980 it was in amity with 90 Grand Lodges.⁵¹

It is still uneasy, however, in its relations with its sister constitutions. In 1982 the Grand Master, S.R. Gasson, sadly reported: "I find that after 21 years (since the formation of the Grand Lodge of Southern Africa in 1961) there are Brethren of these foreign lodges labouring in our country today, at every opportunity endeavouring to undermine our autonomy and belittle our workings".⁵² His words make a fitting conclusion to this post-1961 review of Freemasonry in South Africa.

Gasson told his members: "Your Grand Lodge has taken the lead to improve the image of Masonry in South Africa, and today it is highly respected by the general public as a whole. We have done much to make it a truly South African-orientated Order to cater for the needs of South Africans, bearing in mind our requirements locally.

49. GLSA GL Circular, 15 November, 1977; PMC DGL WD EC Reports: Meeting, 29 April, 1978, pp. 13 - 14.

50. PMC 2/2/3 DGM Correspondence, Coloured Freemasons : Dept. Community Development - Grand Master, 14 October, 1977.

51. GLSA Grand Lodge Reports: GM Report, 1980, p. 3.

52. GLSA Grand Lodge Reports: GM Report, 1982, p. 3.

"We have our own Ritual, we have our own Constitution of which a new version is available bearing our own coat of arms as approved by the State Heraldry Council of Pretoria; we have our National Flag which we use to represent our country and ourselves as a Grand Lodge at functions inside and outside our borders, we have taken very active steps in view of the requirements of Charity in our land, we do not forget those on our borders who are endeavouring to keep the powers of darkness out so that you and I may have a peaceful night's rest.⁵³

"I would thus like to make a special appeal to the foreign Lodges labouring here with us that, even if they do not truly accept us as a Grand Lodge, they should at least refrain from undermining us and, as a result, also Freemasonry at every opportunity.

"After all, it is the duty and right of the Grand Lodge of South Africa to promote Freemasonry in our country to the best of its ability, which it is doing without the support of all Freemasons, but for which all take credit for the progress that was being made.⁵⁴

"Because of this, my Brethren, the challenge is all the greater, and I know that, if each and everyone of us did just that little bit more, progress could be that little bit faster for all Freemasons to get their priorities right. After all, the Grand Lodge of New Zealand took seventy years before it was finally to reign supreme in its Motherland", he added.⁵⁵

In 1982 in South Africa there were some 600 lodges with a membership of 26,300 in the four constitutions. Ten founder members are listed on the 1772 warrant for the first lodge in

53. GLSA Grand Lodge Reports: GM Report, 1982, p. 3.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.; F.G. Northern: History of Grand Lodge of New Zealand, pp. 20, 37 - 48.

Southern Africa, Lodge De Goede Hoop.⁵⁶

As the Grand Lodge of South Africa has asserted itself, in reaction the other constitutions have become wary of losing their independence. At the time of writing - 1983 - a United Grand Lodge for South Africa seems very remote. Yet there are those who believe it is inevitable. On a tour of South African masonic centres in 1982, the writer heard several senior masons of the English, Irish and Scottish constitutions express this view - but all predicted that unity would mean the dissolution of the present Grand Lodge of South Africa. Typical was ninety-one-year-old Mr. J.H. Haliburton who was District Grand Master for the Scottish Lodges in Natal from 1948 to 1953 and 66 years a mason.⁵⁷ He said in an interview: "It is inevitable that a United Grand Lodge of South Africa must come with the merging of the four constitutions. It is only a matter of time. The number of home-born masons to overseas-born is much greater. Their allegiance to Grand Lodges overseas is not the same as 30 years ago. It is essential we sever links with overseas and form our own United Grand Lodge but it will mean the swamping of the present Grand Lodge of South Africa."⁵⁸

Similar views were expressed by the New Zealand Grand Lodge Librarian, Mr. H. Wood, in 1981.

"I suppose the illustration of the child growing at the parents' knee sufficiently apt. As time progresses the child, gaining in experience and feeling the stronger for it, follows the natural road to independence and identity. It depends on the parent whether the child be encouraged or

56. Masonic Year Books and personal interviews with masonic authorities, June, 1983; O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 190.

57. Interview Haliburton, Durban, September, 1982.

58. Ibid.

unhappily, often ignored and the right to make own decisions denied.⁵⁹

"The beginnings of Masonry in New Zealand, the growth resulting in the formation of a sovereign Grand Lodge is not dissimilar from the unhappy child in many ways. Lodges had been formed, spread, districts had come into being. It quickly became apparent that, although the districts had some measure of local administrative authority, government and decision-making remained firmly with the parent Grand bodies.

"National pride is a powerful force. Rules and decisions were being made by the British Grand Lodges with no reference to the New Zealanders and certainly with little knowledge of the country or its people. England's offhandedness removed any doubts as to the prudence of seeking self-determination.⁶⁰

"Class distinctions, i.e. attitudes of those not locally born, undoubtedly played a part. It is, in my mind a disease of the English that they consider themselves superior.

"The Grand Lodges of the world quickly recognised the fledgling body, the New Zealand Grand Lodge, but it took England eight years to come to terms with the status quo. Ireland, obediently following behind, took nine years and Scotland twenty-two.⁶¹

"Meanwhile in the country itself in its earliest days the project was fought by - in the main - those satraps who saw their rank and power in jeopardy. Our histories have been kind and low key. In truth the battle was vicious and totally

59. H. Wood, Librarian, Grand Lodge of New Zealand, letter to writer, 8 April, 1981.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

unmasonic. They were aided and abetted by those too apathetic to become involved and those lately arrived who preferred the imported article to be better than the local product", he wrote.⁶²

That step forward to a United Grand Lodge in South Africa can only be taken if masons of all allegiances give up their constitutional differences and pledge themselves to a genuinely South African United Grand Lodge. Many in positions of authority will have to step down for, in one Grand Lodge, there can be but few officials compared to the hierarchy of provincial and district Grand Lodge officers of the four constitutions existing at present. Pride, ambition and reluctance to accept innovation are the main hindrances to unity as they have been since the concept of a United Grand Lodge for South Africa was first mooted. Consideration of these human attributes is perhaps of as great importance in evaluating the progress in South Africa towards masonic unity as examining the forces of historical circumstance.

62. H. Wood, Librarian, Grand Lodge of New Zealand, letter to writer, 8 April, 1981.

APPENDIX A

WORLD MASONIC MEMBERSHIP 1913 - 1932

"The extraordinary growth of Freemasonry since the close of the war" was noted by the Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge in England in 1920. In 1913 this constitution had 3155 lodges, with 677 abroad, and in 1919, 3443, with 723 abroad. In 1913, 14,831 Grand Lodge certificates had been issued to Master Masons on their taking the third degree. In 1919 this figure had increased to 24,476. By 1920 total membership was 240,000. (Quarterly Communications, Grand Lodge of England, 12 June, 1920, pp. 176 - 177).

Globally in 1919, the United States had the largest membership, with 51 Grand Lodges containing 15,223 private lodges and membership of 2, 086,808. The Scottish Grand Lodge ruled over 1,158 lodges with 69,745 members and Ireland 530 lodges with 18,000 members. These figures included English, Irish and Scottish masons in South Africa.

Australia had seven Grand Lodges with 1,025 private lodges and a membership register of 74,733; while Canada had nine Grand Lodges, 1057 private lodges and 118,113 members. (S.A. Masonic Journal, October, 1920, Vol.XI, No.6, p. 209.)

In 1932 in Continental Europe (not including France) there were 2000 lodges with an aggregate membership of 210,000. There were nine Grand Lodges in Germany, after which Sweden headed the membership list with 21,805, although it had only 30 lodges. Norway had 24 lodges, with a total of 9,233 members. The Netherlands claimed 123 lodges with 7,475 members; Austria 25 lodges with 1,652 members; Bulgaria eight lodges with 900 members; and Czecho-slovakia 20 lodges with 923 members. In Latin America there were 450 lodges with 41,000 members. (S.A. Masonic Journal, February, 1932, p. 315).

APPENDIX EMASONIC MEMBERSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA 1914 - 1920

Many of those on active service during the 1914 - 1918 war were retained on lodge membership rolls without payment of dues while some districts did not publish membership figures. Thus any accurate assessment is impossible. However figures given in district annual reports are given here where available. Records were missing in several districts.

ENGLISH CONSTITUTION

	1914	1918	1920
Transvaal Division	2516	2312	2390
Central Division	517	458	510
Natal Division	1560	1662	1734
Western Division	1547	1689	2003
Eastern Division	2085	2179	2366

NETHERLANDS CONSTITUTION

South Africa (Transvaal excepted)	1077	-	1180
Transvaal	332	297	329

SCOTTISH CONSTITUTION

Eastern Province (formed 1920)	-	-	186
Natal	-	-	-
Transvaal	2700	-	3050
Western Province	500	500	600

IRISH CONSTITUTION

Cape (formed 1925)	-	-	-
Transvaal	-	-	-
	12834+	10097	14348

APPENDIX C

AIMS AND RELATIONSHIPS OF ENGLISH FREEMASONRY

From time to time the United Grand Lodge of England has deemed it desirable to set forth in precise form the aims of Freemasonry as consistently practised under its Jurisdiction, since it came into being as an organised body in 1717, and also to define the principles governing its relations with those other Grand Lodges with which it is in fraternal accord.

In view of representations which have been received, and of statements recently issued which have distorted or obscured the true objects of Freemasonry, it is once again considered necessary to emphasize certain fundamental principles of the Order.

The first condition of admission into, and membership of, the Order is a belief in the Supreme Being. This is essential and admits of no compromise.

The Bible, referred to by Freemasons as the Volume of the Sacred Law, is always open in the Lodges. Every candidate is required to take his Obligation on that book or on the Volume which is held by his particular creed to impart sanctity to an oath or promise taken upon it.

Everyone who enters Freemasonry, is, at the outset, strictly forbidden to countenance any act which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society, he must pay due obedience to the law of any state in which he resides or which may afford him protection, and he must never be remiss in the allegiance due to the Sovereign of his native land.

While English Freemasonry thus inculcates in each of its members the duties of loyalty and citizenship, it reserves to the individual the right to hold his own opinion with

regard to public affairs. But neither in any Lodge, not at any time in his capacity as a Freemason, is he permitted to discuss or to advance his views on theological or political questions.

The Grand Lodge has always consistently refused to express any opinion on questions of foreign or domestic state policy either at home or abroad, and it will not allow its name to be associated with any action, however humanitarian it may appear to be, which infringes its unalterable policy of standing aloof from every question affecting the relations between one government and another, or between political parties, or questions as to rival theories of government.

The Grand Lodge is aware that there do exist Bodies, styling themselves Freemasons, which do not adhere to these principles, and while that attitude exists the Grand Lodge of England refuses absolutely to have any relations with such Bodies, or to regard them as Freemasons.

The Grand Lodge of England is a Sovereign and independent Body practising Freemasonry only within the three Degrees and only within the limits defined in its Constitution as "pure Antient Masonry". It does not recognise or admit the existence of any superior Masonic authority, however styled.

On more than one occasion the Grand Lodge has refused, and will continue to refuse, to participate in Conferences with so-called International Associations claiming to represent Freemasonry, which admit to membership Bodies failing to conform strictly to the principles upon which the Grand Lodge is founded. The Grand Lodge does not admit any such claim, nor can its views be represented by any such Association.

There is no secret with regard to any of the basic principles of Freemasonry, some of which have been stated above. The Grand Lodge will always consider the recognition of those Grand Lodges which profess, and practise, and can show that

they have consistently professed and practised those established and unaltered principles, but in no circumstances will it enter into discussion with a view to any new or varied interpretation of them. They must be accepted and practised wholeheartedly and in their entirety by those who desire to be recognised as Freemasons by the United Grand Lodge of England.

Sgd. SYDNEY A. WHITE
Grand Secretary..

(FMH UGLE Report: 7 September, 1938)

APPENDIX DCONDITIONS FOR RECOGNITION OF GRAND LODGES BY THE UNITED
GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

In 1929 the United Grand Lodge of England set out its basic principles for Grand Lodge recognition.

1. Regularity of origin; i.e. each Grand Lodge shall have been established lawfully by a duly recognised Grand Lodge or by three or more regularly constituted lodges;
2. that a belief in the G.A.O.T.U. (God) and His revealed will (The Sacred Law) shall be an essential qualification for membership;
3. that all initiates shall take their Obligation on or in full view of the open Volume of the Sacred Law, by which is meant the revelation from above which is binding on the conscience of the particular individual who is to be initiated;
4. that the membership of the Grand Lodge and individual lodges be composed exclusively of men; and that each Grand Lodge shall have no masonic intercourse of any kind with mixed lodges or bodies which admit women to membership;
5. that the Grand Lodge shall have sovereign jurisdiction over the Lodges under its control, i.e. that it shall be a responsible, independent governing organisation, with sole and undisputed authority over the Craft Symbolic Degrees (Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason) within its Jurisdiction; and shall not in any way be subjected to, or divided in authority, with a Supreme Council or other Power claiming any control supervision over those degrees;
6. that the three Great Lights of Freemasonry (namely, the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square and the Compasses) shall always be exhibited when the Grand Lodge or its subordinate Lodges are at work, the chief of these being the Volume of the Sacred Law;
7. that the discussion of religion and politics within the Lodge shall be strictly prohibited;
8. that the principles of the Antient Landmarks, customs and usages of the Craft shall be strictly observed.

(FMH UGLE Report: 4 September, 1929, p. 8.)

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1979 (FMH, PMC)

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Archives of Lodge De Goede Hoop: Minute Books

<u>Vol. No.</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Period</u>
ACC 731	1/1/2	1806 - 1809
ACC 731	1/1/4	1814 - 1817
ACC 731	1/1/8	1835 - 1840

Archives of Provincial Grand Master English Constitution
for South Africa 1821 - 1874

CA A2257 Vol.3. Patent of Appointment January, 1826.

Archives of Deputy Grand Master National Netherlands
Constitution for South Africa 1864 - 1913

Vol. No.	File No.	Letters Received Subject	Period
A2223	8	Burghersdorp petition	Jan.1861 - Dec. 1862
A2223	9	New Lodge Petitions	Jan.1863 - Dec. 1863
A2223	10	New Lodge Petitions	Jan.1864 - Dec. 1865
A2223	11	New Lodge Petitions	Jan.1866 - Dec. 1866
A2223	12	Buyskes, Masonic Epistle	Jan.1867 - Dec. 1867
A2223	13	Diamond Rush	Jan.1868 - Dec. 1868
A2223	14	Doësel	Jan.1869 - Dec. 1869
A2223	15	Albany suspension	Jan.1870 - Dec. 1870
A2223	17	Circulars 1871	Jan.1871 - Dec. 1871
A2223	18	Diamond Rush	Dec.1871 - Dec. 1873
A2223	21	Joppa circular	Oct.1874 - Nov. 1878
A2223	22	Returns	June 1876- June 1891
A2223	26	Letters Received: Lodges, Harmony, Richmond	Jul.1868 - Sep. 1883
A2223	31	Circulars Received	1837 - 1850
A2223	35	Returns	Mar. 1835- Mar. 1874
A2223	Addendum 1/7 Regulations and Statutes		1837 - 1913
A2223	Addendum 1/8 Bulletins		1871 - 1910

Archives of the Provincial Grand Master, Provincial Grand
Lodge of the Netherlandic Constitution, 1856 - 1962

Vol No.	File No.	Subject	Period
A2263	1	Minutes	Oct.1870 - May 1903
A2263	2	Minutes	Mar.1904 - Sep. 1957
A2263	3	Letters Received	Apr.1864 - Jan.1879
A2263	4	Letters Received Aurora closed	May 1868 - Nov. 1872
A2263	10	Returns Lodge Members	Jun.1910 - Dec. 1921 Dec.1956 - Jan. 1962
A2263	11	Letters Despatched General	Jul.1875 - Mar. 1885

<u>Vol. No.</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Period</u>
A2263	12	Letters Despatched, Financial, appeal for funds	Jun.1871 - Aug. 1899
A2263	13	Circulars Despatched	1905 - 1960
A2263	14	Correspondence - Resumption of work	1899 - 1903
A2263	16	Annual Reports - Returns	1875 - 1898
A2263	26	Regulations	1872 - 1945
A2263	28	Nominal Register of lodges	1874 - 1875
A2263	29	Newspaper cuttings	1895 - 1897
A2263	30	Pamphlets	1856 - 1926

Unlisted Material at Cape Archives (Temporary numbers given
during sorting by writer)

- Unlisted No. 7. Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa,
Netherlandic Constitution: Reports, Returns,
1867 - 1899
- Unlisted No. 8. Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa,
Netherlandic Constitution: Reports, Returns,
1900 - 1906
- Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa,
Netherlandic Constitution (Transvaal
Excepted): Reports, Returns, 1907 - 1926

Unlisted Material at Cape Archives (Temporary numbers given
during sorting by writer)

Lodge De Goede Hoop

Unlisted No.

1. Minute Book 1 Oct. 1844 - 31 Dec. 1868
4. Minute Book 5 Aug. 1885 - 10 Feb. 1892
5. Minute Book 2 Mar. 1892 - 22 Jun. 1895
6. Minute Book 3 Jul. 1895 - 9 Feb. 1898

Lodge De Goede Hoop (continued)Unlisted No.

- 7. Minute Book 2 Mar. 1898 - 9 May 1900
- 8. Minute Book 1 Jun. 1902 - 5 Jul. 1905
- 9. Minute Book 29 Jun. 1905 - 9 Sep. 1908
- 10. Minute Book 14 Oct. 1908 - 1 Feb. 1911
- 11. Minute Book 1 Feb. 1911 - 26 Jun. 1913
- 12. Minute Book 28 Jun. 1913 - 8 Dec. 1915
- 13. Minute Book Apr. 1929 - Jan. 1932
- 14. Minute Book June 1950 - Dec. 1961 (incomplete)
- 15 - 18 Annexures to Minutes 1891 - 1899
- 24. Letter Books Oct. 1877 - 1888, Nov. 1888 - Mar. 1893
- 28 - 36 Letters Received and Sent 1815, 1833 - 1847, 1870 - 1879, 1876 - 1884, 1892 - 1906
- 37 - 46 Letters Received and Sent 1906 - 1913, 1918 - 1924, 1926 - 1928, 1931, 1934 - 1943, 1950 - 1960

- 64. Masonic Education Fund, Annual Reports 1892 - 1935 (incomplete)
- 67. Flaming Star Lodge, Potchefstroom, Minute Books 1865 - 1881, 1871 - 1874, 1875 - 1878, 1879 - 1881
- 72. Lodge Aurora, Pretoria, Minute Books 1868 - 1869, 1874 - 1878
- 76. Lodge Harmony, Richmond, Minute Books 1867 - 1883
- 76A. Lodge Harmony, Richmond, Letter Book 1868 - 1882

Deputy District Chancellor High Degrees: Netherlandic ConstitutionUnlisted

- 6. Correspondence: Supreme Chapter of S.A. 1890 1885 - 1898
- 7. Correspondence 1892 - 1904
- 16A. Chapter De Goede Hoop: Letters Received 1880 - 1885
- 16B. Chapter De Goede Hoop: Letters Received 1895 - 1908
- 17A. Chapter De Goede Hoop: Minutes 1885 - 1886

Argief van die Kerkraad van die N.G. Kerk, KaapstadCape

Acta Synodi: 1915, 1932, 1940, 1945, 1961

Transvaal

Acta Synodi: 1931, 1957

Orange Free State

Acta Synodi: 1948, 1960

Natal

Acta Synodi: 1954, 1957

General

Acta Synodi: 1962

Archives of the District Grand Lodge Western Division English
Constitution, Pinelands Masonic Centre, Cape Town

Number	Subject	Period
1/1/1	Minute Book	15 Apr. 1864 - 16 Mar. 1871
1/1/2	Minute Book	9 Jun. 1871 - 10 Apr. 1879
1/1/3	Minute Book	3 May 1879 - 10 Jun. 1891
1/1/4	Minute Book	20 Jul. 1891 - 14 Apr. 1903
1/1/6	Minute Book	15 Sep. 1911 - 14 Oct. 1925
1/1/7	Minute Book	15 Oct. 1925 - 26 Mar. 1955 and Returns
1/10/1	Returns	1925 - 1955, 1956 - 1971
1/3/3	Correspondence	12 Aug. 1896 - 13 Jun. 1916
1/5/1	Register of Masons in South Africa	c. 1873
1/7/1	Register Lodges and Chapters	1939 - 1947

District Grand Master Western Division English Constitution,
Pinelands Masonic Centre, Cape Town

Correspondence

2/1/2	1904 - 1930
2/1/3	1927 - 1939
2/1/4	1927 - 1930
2/1/5	1930 - 1935
2/1/6	1936 - 1937
2/1/7	1938 - 1942
2/1/8	1942 - 1944
2/1/9	1945 - 1946
2/1/10	1947 - 1949
2/1/11	1949 - 1953
2/1/12	1953 - 1957
2/1/13	1957 - 1960
2/1/14	1961 - 1963
2/1/15	Grand Lodge of Southern Africa; S.A. Order of Freemasons 1959 - 1961
2/2/1	Inter-Constitutional Conferences 1966 - 1978
2/2/2	Special File, D.R.C. Attacks from 1940
2/2/3	Coloured Freemasons 1978

Occasional Papers

2/3/1 and 2/3/2	Handbooks to Constitutions - Decisions on Appeal, Rulings and Opinions Vol.I and II, 1936 - 1960
2/3/8	Netherlands Constitution Reports: 1869 - 1923 (with gaps)

British Lodge, Cape Town, Pinelands Masonic Centre, Cape Town

3/1/1	Minute Book	11 Nov. 1812 - 28 Dec. 1819
3/1/3	Minute Book	31 Dec. 1824 - 26 Dec. 1840
3/1/4	Minute Book	20 Jan. 1841 - 5 Dec. 1855
3/1/5	Minute Book	20 Dec. 1855 - 28 Dec. 1864
3/1/8	Minute Book	25 May 1874 - 18 Jun. 1879
3/1/9	Minute Book	24 Jun. 1879 - 2 Dec. 1885
3/1/10	Minute Book	20 Jan. 1886 - 19 Dec. 1894
3/1/11	Minute Book	16 Jan. 1895 - 18 May 1904
3/1/12	Minute Book	15 Jun. 1904 - 19 May 1915
3/1/13	Minute Book	16 Jun. 1915 - 20 Aug. 1924
3/1/14	Minute Book	15 Oct. 1924 - 16 May 1928
3/1/15	Minute Book	20 Jun. 1928 - 22 Dec. 1931
3/1/16	Minute Book	20 Jan. 1932 - 16 Jan. 1935
3/1/17	Minute Book	20 Feb. 1935 - 20 Jul. 1938
3/1/18	Minute Book	17 Aug. 1938 - 11 Mar. 1942
3/1/19	Minute Book	15 Apr. 1942 - 21 May 1947
3/1/23	Minute Book	15 Jan. 1964 - 16 Nov. 1966.

Phoenix Lodge, Simon's Town, Pinelands Masonic Centre, Cape Town

14/1/3	Minute Book	13 Jan. 1919 - 11 Mar. 1923
14/1/6	Minute Book	9 Mar. 1936 - 11 Dec. 1939
	Minute Book	8 Jan. 1940 - 16 Aug. 1945
14/1/7	Minute Book	8 Sep. 1945 - 19 Jul. 1954
14/1/8	Minute Book	14 Aug. 1954 - 8 Jul. 1963
14/1/9	Minute Book	17 Aug. 1963 - 12 Jul. 1971.

Lodge Histories, Pinelands Masonic Centre, Cape Town

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typed MSS, c. 1976.

Beresford, W.H.: Early Years of Port Alfred Lodge, typed
MSS, C. 1964.

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1893 - 1936, typed MSS, 1936.
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1864 - 1921, typed MSS, 1938.
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typed MSS, C. 1974.

Archives of the Provincial Grand Lodge Southern Cape,
Irish Constitution, Cape Town

File, Formation Provincial Grand Lodge Southern Cape:
Correspondence 19 Apr. 1912 - 15 May 1925 with
letters from 1905

Minute Book	1 Mar. 1925 - 16 May 1933
Minute Book	16 May 1933 - 20 May 1941
Minute Book	18 May 1943 - 7 Aug. 1953
Minute Book	18 Nov. 1953 - 28 Jan. 1961
Minute Book	10 Aug. 1961 - 29 Aug. 1967

Archives District Grand Lodge Western Province, Scottish
Constitution, Cape Town

Minute Book	16 Sep. 1901 - 26 Jul. 1915
Minute Book	26 Jul. 1915 - 12 Jan. 1925
Letter Book	22 Dec. 1906 - 30 Mar. 1909
Returns	1902 - 1904, 1914, 1918, 1920, 1948

Archives Provincial Grand Lodge (Transvaal Excepted)
Netherlandic Constitution, Cape Town

Returns	1904 - 1942 (PMC)
Correspondence	1958 - 1960
Correspondence	1960 - 1961

Archives of United Masonic Temple, KimberleyDistrict Grand Lodge Central Division, English Constitution

Centenary Communication	22 May 1976
Minute Book	22 Jan. 1896 - 24 Sep. 1913
Minute Book	16 Apr. 1928 - 18 Jan. 1933
Minute Book	15 Feb. 1933 - 19 Feb. 1947
Board of General Purposes Minutes	7 Feb. 1896 - 12 Mar. 1928
Board of General Purposes Minutes	16 Apr. 1928 - 18 Jan. 1933
Board of General Purposes Minutes	15 Feb. 1933 - 19 Feb. 1947
Board of General Purposes Minutes	21 Feb. 1951 - 15 Oct. 1958
Returns	1931 - 1934, 1939 - 1946.

Correspondence

Haarhoff Lodge	7 May 1949 - 20 Sep. 1955
Lodge De Aar	7 Feb. 1949 - 25 Nov. 1958
Prieska Lodge	27 Oct. 1949 - 21 Jul. 1959
Austral Lodge, Mafeking	19 Oct. 1948 - 11 Sep. 1955
Franklin Lodge, Windsorton	19 Dec. 1940 - 6 Sep. 1958
Henry B. Loch	26 May 1948 - 20 Sep. 1958
Richard Giddy Lodge	2 Sep. 1949 - 6 Sep. 1958
Cosmopolitan Lodge	23 Sep. 1943 - 6 Sep. 1958
Stella Lodge, Vryburg	28 Sep. 1943 - 6 Sep. 1958
Octahedron Lodge, Barkley West	16 Aug. 1949 - 6 Sep. 1958
Charles Warren Lodge	21 Jun. 1946 - 6 Sep. 1958
Oasis Lodge, Kurruman	23 Apr. 1946 - 20 Sep. 1958
Kalahari Lodge, Upington	15 Oct. 1943 - 20 Sep. 1958
Conference: Masters and Secretaries	29 Nov. 1947 - 4 Dec. 1958

Cosmopolitan Lodge

Minute Book	26 Apr. 1872 - 14 Jun. 1877
Minute Book	22 Jun. 1877 - 13 Dec. 1883
Minute Book	7 Jan. 1884 - 6 Feb. 1890
Minute Book	9 Feb. 1890 - 6 Dec. 1897
Minute Book	3 Jan. 1898 - 6 Jun. 1910.

Octahedron Lodge

Minute Book	12 May 1871 - 1 Dec. 1874
Minute Book	2 Dec. 1874 - 6 Jan. 1885
Minute Book	7 Apr. 1885 - 11 Dec. 1887
Minute Book	15 Jun. 1897 - 4 Sep. 1906.

Richard Giddy Lodge

Minute Book	22 Jul. 1875 - 1 Jul. 1886
Minute Book	16 Apr. 1886 - 16 Apr. 1896
Minute Book	6 Aug. 1903 - 7 Sep. 1911
Minute Book	5 Oct. 1911 - 1 Mar. 1917
Minute Book	19 Oct. 1927 - 5 Sep. 1946
Minute Book	3 Oct. 1946 - 17 Oct. 1957
Minute Book	2 Nov. 1957 - 7 Mar. 1974
Letters Received	21 Aug. 1889 - 14 Jan. 1892, 1924 - 1925
Letters Sent	14 Jul. 1887 - 4 Mar. 1905.

Peace and Harmony Lodge

Minute Book	29 Apr. 1873 - 19 Jun. 1878
Minute Book	5 Feb. 1893 - 16 Oct. 1907.

Charles Warren Lodge

Minute Book	9 Oct. 1879 - 18 Dec. 1890
Minute Book	14 Oct. 1897 - 14 Sep. 1905
Minute Book	12 Oct. 1905 - 11 Dec. 1913
Minute Book	14 Apr. 1927 - 9 Aug. 1934
Minute Book	12 Sep. 1935 - 30 Mar. 1946
Minute Book	11 Apr. 1946 - 12 Feb. 1959
Minute Book	3 Mar. 1959 - 11 Apr. 1974
Minute Book	9 Aug. 1974 - 14 Jul. 1977.
Correspondence	7 Mar. 1879 - 3 Jun. 1887
Correspondence	1 Jul. 1896 - 30 Jun. 1899
Correspondence	1 Jul. 1899 - 20 Dec. 1902
Correspondence	15 Dec. 1905 - 20 Jul. 1915
Correspondence	1916 - 1922
Correspondence	1928 - 1938.

Kimberley Temple Management Committee Letter Book 2 Aug. 1900 -
2 Feb. 1912.

Lodge Histories and Documents

Macdonald, W.I.: Cosmopolitan Lodge No. 1409 EC, Kimberley,
typed MSS, 1927.

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Kimberley, typed MSS, 1925.

Vaisey, H.B., Deputy Grand Registrar: Report on Boundaries and
Districts in South Africa, 1936, typed MSS,
1936.

Archives of District Grand Lodge Transvaal, English Constitution,
Parktown North, Johannesburg

Minute Book	30 Apr. 1895 - 2 Oct. 1915
Minute Book	22 Jul. 1904 - 17 May 1912
Minute Book	2 Mar. 1937 - 4 Sep. 1945
Minute Book	2 Oct. 1945 - 2 Sep. 1952
Board of General Purposes Minute Book	7 May 1895 - 5 Jul. 1904
Annual Returns	1900 - 1946.

Archives of the District Grand Lodge Transvaal and Orange
Free State, Scottish Constitution, Johannesburg

Minute Book	27 Mar. 1896 - 28 Mar. 1912
Minute Book	22 Jun. 1912 - 15 Dec. 1926
Returns	1912 - 1960

Archives of the Provincial Grand Lodge Transvaal
Netherlandic Constitution (Formed 1906) Johannesburg

Minute Book	23 Apr. 1906 - 27 Aug. 1932
Minute Book	29 Jul. 1933 - 4 Oct. 1947
Executive Committee Minutes	3 Dec. 1948 - 2 Jun. 1964
Returns	1906 - 1947.

Archives of the Grand Lodge of South Africa, Johannesburg

Grand Lodge Circulars,

Reports and Returns	1963 - 1982
Grand Lodge Minutes	18 Feb. 1961 - 20 Aug. 1966
Grand Lodge Meetings	1969 - 1981

Grand Lodge Committee

Minutes and Correspondence	1977 - 1980
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File Provincial Grand Lodge Transvaal Correspondence 1960 - 1974.

File Provincial Grand Lodge Southern Division Correspondence

6 Jun. 1969 - 25 Apr. 1982.

Grand Master's Correspondence	19 Dec. 1961 - 22 Aug. 1973
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1 Feb. 1978 - 28 Oct. 1981.

File Biennial Meeting of Sister Constitutions

4 Jun. 1966 - 2 Aug. 1966.

Archives of District Grand Lodge Eastern Division English
Constitution, Port Elizabeth

Minutes Grahamstown Meetings	15, 16, 17 Nov. 1876.
Minute Book	15 Nov. 1876 - 11 Sep. 1895
Minute Book	11 Sep. 1895 - 9 Sep. 1903
Minute Book	14 Sep. 1904 - 29 Mar. 1941.
Annual Returns	1929 - 1935
Annual Returns	1939 - 1946.

Archives of District Grand Lodge Eastern Province Scottish
Constitution, East London

Minute Book	2 Aug. 1920 - 2 Oct. 1938.
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Archives of Provincial Grand Lodge Natal Irish Constitution,
Durban

Minute Book	1 Jul. 1932 - 7 Dec. 1957
Minute Book	7 Jun. 1958 - 19 Apr. 1982.
Provincial Board of General Purposes Minutes	15 Aug. 1932 - 19 Dec. 1955
Provincial Board of General Purposes Minutes	16 Jan. 1956 - 15 Mar. 1971
Provincial Board of General Purposes Minutes	19 Apr. 1971 - 16 Jul. 1979.

Archives District Grand Lodge Natal Scottish Constitution,
Durban

Returns	1903 - 1977
Lodge Caledonian Minute Book	6 Nov. 1866 - 10 Oct. 1881
Lodge Caledonian Minute Book	27 Dec. 1881 - 22 Dec. 1896
Lodge Caledonian Minute Book	19 Jan. 1897 - 12 Dec. 1905
Lodge Caledonian Minute Book	9 Jan. 1906 - 9 Dec. 1930
Lodge Caledonian Minute Book	12 Jan. 1931 - 12 Dec. 1944

Committee Minutes	7 Jan. 1868 - 27 Dec. 1889
Committee Minutes	22 Dec. 1902 - 6 Oct. 1925
Committee Minutes	3 Nov. 1925 - 19 Dec. 1939
Committee Minutes	9 Jan. 1945 - 27 Jul. 1954.

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- Anon.: Thistle Lodge SC History, 1905 - 1934, typed MSS, c. 1936.
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- Anon.: Lodge Maritzburg County SC, 1905 - 1936, typed MSS, c. 1940.
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Archives of District Grand Lodge Natal English Constitution Pietermaritzburg

Annual Returns 1900 - 1946.

Archives of the United Grand Lodge of England, Freemasons Hall, London

SN 1584

British Lodge	1811 - 1870
Record of Warrants and Petitions	
South Africa	1812 - 1900
Fairbridge - Grand Master	
Memorial	5 Aug. 1862

Letters to South Africa	1860 - 1880
District Grand Lodge Eastern Division Letter File	1875
Grand Lodge Letters	1875
Eastern Division S.A. Returns	1880 - 1881
File Natal, Eastern Division, Central Division, Loose papers	1880
S.A. Griqualand and Central Division District Grand Lodge Letter Files	1876 - 1895
Division of Districts in South Africa	1874 - 1882
Transvaal and Victoria Files	1860 - 1906
S.A. Western Division, Punjab Files	1860 - 1900
Returns South Africa	1870 - 1900
Register of Lodges in South Africa	1870 - 1890
Natal District Grand Lodge Returns	1883 - 1899
Natal District Grand Lodge Returns	1900 - 1910
Loose Papers, Natal	1860 - 1906
Loose Papers, Central Division	1860 - 1906
Proceedings District Grand Lodge, Natal	1882 - 1904
District Grand Lodge Eastern Division Correspondence	1900 - 1910
Transvaal Question	1881
Miscellaneous Papers, Transvaal	1881 - 1910

Archives of Grand Lodge of Scotland, Edinburgh

Grand Lodge Committee proceedings	1849 - 1982
Letter Book	15 Mar. 1855 - Jan. 1863
Foreign Letter Book	17 Dec. 1856 - 11 Nov. 1858.

Archives of the Grand East of the Netherlands, The Hague

Grand Master's File External Relations	1958 - 1961
Bulletin van het Grootoosten der Nederlanden	1879 - 1960 (with gaps)
Witboek van het Grootoosten der Nederlanden	Mar. 1960
Vergadering van het Buitengewoon Grootoosten der Nederlanden in 1881	13 Feb. 1881.